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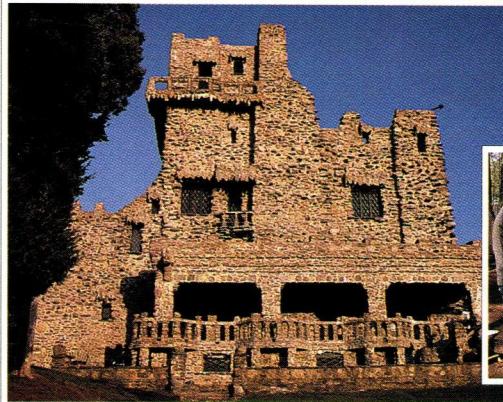
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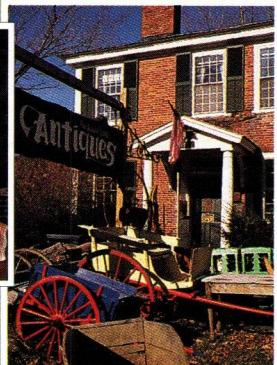
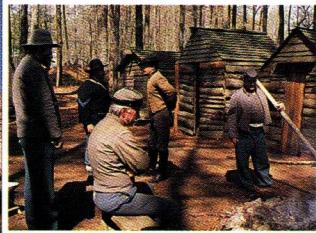
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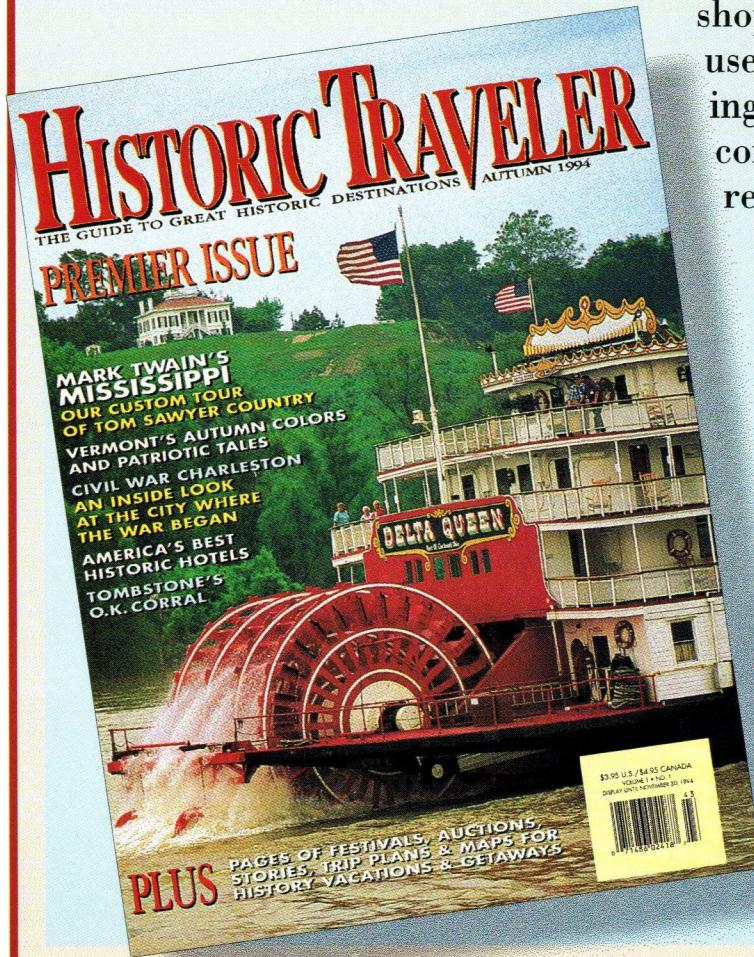


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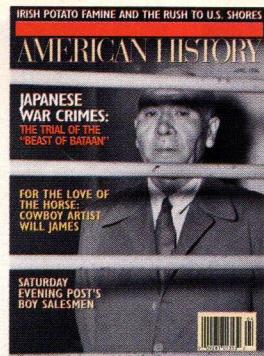
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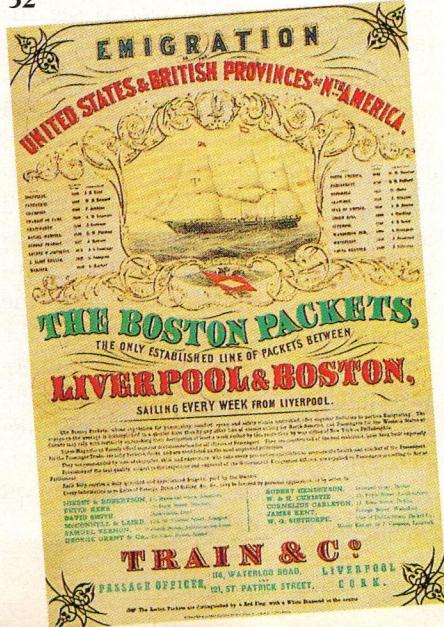
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EDITOR'S DESK

thoughts on history

With this issue, *American History* celebrates its thirtieth anniversary. It is sobering to think that we have now been around long enough to include in the magazine articles about events—the end of the Vietnam war, the Watergate scandal, the moon landings, or the rise of the women's movement, to name a few—that have occurred since we began publication in 1966 and that are now legitimately part of "history."

It is a particularly significant milestone for me personally because this anniversary issue is the first in which I am officially listed on the masthead as the editor. Undertaking that role on a temporary basis two issues back was exciting, but quite intimidating, largely because I was following Ed Holm, who led the magazine so ably for 12 years.

During the six years I have been with *American History*, we have heard from many readers—through letters and surveys—about what you would like to see in future issues. We need this kind of input; without it, we have no way to determine where your interests lie. So please, continue to let us know whether we are meeting your needs and touching on the topics that you would like to see addressed.

Featured in this issue of *American History* is an account of the war-crimes trial of General Homma Masaharu (page 28), the commander in charge of the Japanese troops who in 1942 committed atrocities during what became known as the "Bataan Death March" in the Philippines. General Homma was one of the first military officers ever tried under the principle that a commander is ultimately responsible for the actions of his men, whether or not he knew of their misdeeds. It is a timely subject, since unfortunately the same issue has risen yet again; this time in Bosnia.



Peter Cook's article focuses on the lawyers assigned to defend General Homma before the U.S. military tribunal in Manila. Initially, the six young Army officers regretted their selection; like other American servicemen, they wished to be on their way home to their families. And, like other American servicemen, they detested those who had perpetrated such horrific crimes against American prisoners of war and our Filipino allies. Once chosen, however, the six determined to do their utmost to provide Homma with the best defense possible under American law.

As they got to know him, the defense team concluded that General Homma had not had any knowledge of the atrocities, was someone who could help lead Japan away from its militaristic past, and did not deserve to be executed. But they faced an uphill battle and, in the end, were able only to secure for Homma a soldier's death by firing squad, rather than an ignominious death by hanging. They were proud of their participation in the trial because by using every legal means possible to obtain a fair hearing for their client, they kept faith with the American system of justice.

Though very different from each other, three articles in this issue recall America's immigrant roots. On page 16, Dan Vogel traces Emma Lazarus's *The New Colossus*, the inspiring poem written for the Statue of Liberty, to the nation's oldest synagogue. Beginning on page 52, Edward Oxford recounts the terrible famine that decimated the population of Ireland and brought more than a million Irish immigrants to America's shores in the 1840s. And, the story told by William Bell of artist and writer Will James, a French Canadian by birth, puts a unusual slant on the immigrant experience (page 40).

—Margaret Fortier

AMERICAN HISTORY

Vol. XXXI No. 1

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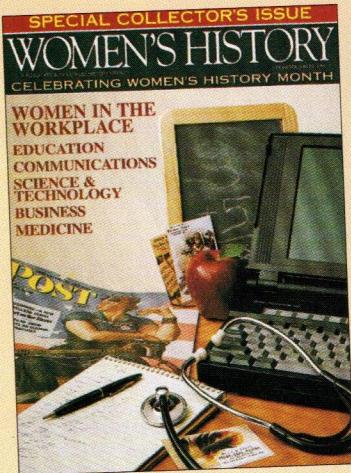
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**THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF
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edited by Kenneth T. Jackson (Yale University Press, 1,372 pages, \$60.00). With the aid of seven hundred illustrations, maps, and tables, this all-encompassing, one-volume encyclopedia, which was 13 years in the making, exhibits the vitality, complexity, and diversity of New York City. The 4,300 entries include such little-known facts as the origin of the landfill—rubble from the London blitz—upon which Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive was built and the earliest known use of the term “New Yorker” in a published work—in a letter written by George Washington in 1756.

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(A&E Television Networks, \$59.95). This four-cassette video presentation portrays the “inside” story of one of the most respected law-enforcement agencies in the world from its 1865 establishment to the present day. The series traces, through exclusive interviews and behind-the-scenes film footage, the exploits of the men who are willing to risk their lives as protectors of America’s presidents.

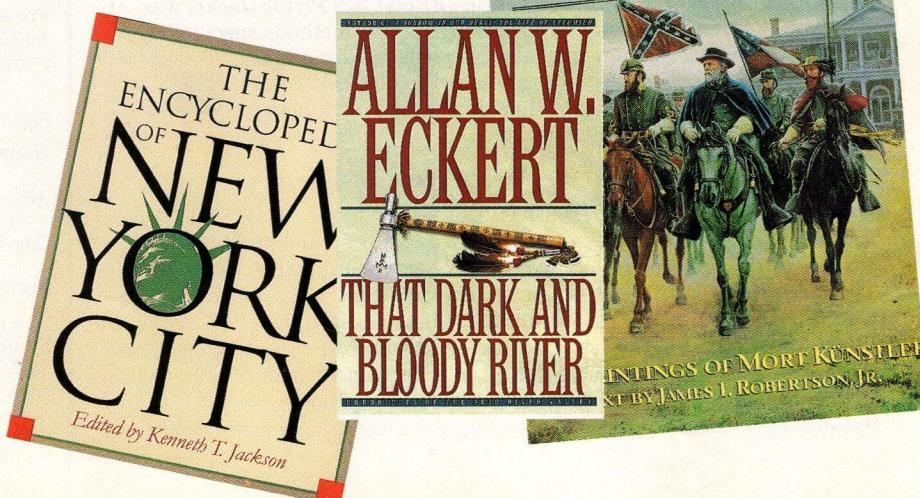
**BETWEEN TWO FIRES: AMERICAN
INDIANS IN THE CIVIL WAR**
by Laurence M. Hauptman (The Free Press, 304 pages, \$25.00). Some twenty

thousand Native Americans served in both the Union and Confederate armies during the Civil War in roles that ranged from sharpshooter and guerrilla to general. Hauptman looks at nine tribal groups in different parts of the country and explains why Indians participated in the conflict at a time when their own survival was being threatened and why the outcome was as much, or even more, a tragedy for them than it was for the North and South.

**ONE HUNDRED OVER 100:
MOMENTS WITH ONE HUNDRED
NORTH AMERICAN CENTENARIANS**

by Jim Heyman, photographs by Paul Boyer (Fulcrum Publishing, 200 pages, \$35.00). One hundred stories and accompanying black-and-white photographs reflect the lives of the extraordinary centenarians, part of an increasingly large segment of American society, who are featured in this book. As Paul Boyer comments: “Jim and I were not doing a book about old people. We were doing a book about people crossing boundaries, people overcoming fears and ignorance, people reaching out to their fellow human beings.”

continued on page 14



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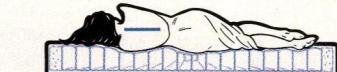
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funds for the restoration and preservation of New York City's world-famous park, plans a spring opening for the Henry Luce Nature Observatory, a facility offering educational exhibits and programs focusing on the diverse fauna and flora found in the Manhattan oasis. The Center, located within Belvedere Castle, is designed to encourage visitors to experience science and nature firsthand with engaging, interactive displays that feature microscopes for examining specimens from nearby Turtle Pond; binocular stands for observing the Ramble, the park's renowned woodland bird habitat; and a link up to an automated weather system recently installed by the U.S. Weather Service Station in the castle. Grants from the Henry Luce Foundation, the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, and the Charles Hayden Foundation provided the necessary funds for the observatory's establishment; educational and public programs; and restoration of Belvedere Castle, a Gothic-style structure designed by Calvert Vaux (1824-1895) and Jacob Wrey Mould, two of Central Park's landscape architects, to serve as a lookout tower atop Vista Rock within the Ramble.

"IRON CURTAIN" SPEECH RECALLED

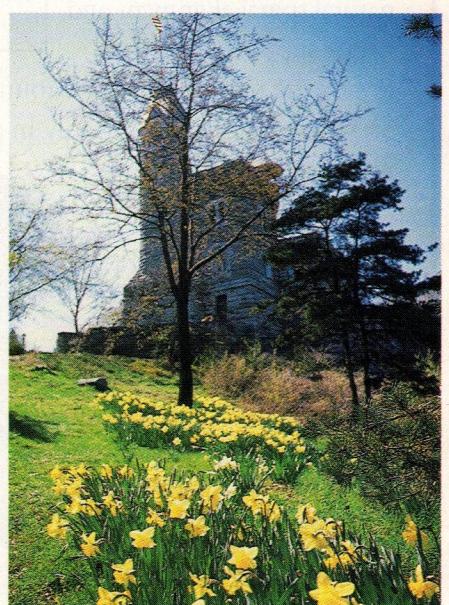
Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (1925-) has accepted an invitation from Fulton, Missouri's Westminster College to deliver a major address there on March 9. Her appearance commemorates one of the most famous speeches of the post-World War II era, the 1946 "Sinews of Peace" oration by her predecessor, Britain's wartime prime minister, Winston Churchill (1874-1965). In that earlier address, Churchill declared: "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe . . . and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence, but . . . [to] control from Moscow." Popularly known as the "Iron Curtain" speech, it coined a metaphor that foreshadowed the "Cold War" and the

Kremlin's 1961 order to erect a wall between Soviet and Allied spheres of influence in Berlin, the divided wartime capital of Germany. Many historians characterize this speech as Churchill's most significant post-war statement.

In addition to Lady Thatcher's commemorative address, the college plans a range of events during March 7-10 that mirror those surrounding Churchill's visit fifty years ago. Highlights include a train ride aboard vintage rail cars along the circuit traveled by Churchill and American President Harry Truman (1884-1972) en route to Westminster and a parade retracing their motorcade route. An academic symposium will also be held to discuss "Churchill's speech in its 1946 context and the impact of his words then and now." For more information call 314- 592-1312.

LEARNING CENTER OPENED

The Central Park Conservancy, a non-profit group formed in 1980 to raise



BELVEDERE CASTLE, NEW YORK CITY



TRADEMARK RETURNS HOME

The 14-foot, 1,700-pound, canvas-and-fiberglass statue of "Nipper," the fox terrier who gazes raptly into the horn of a gramophone in the beloved and nationally recognized trademark of the Radio Corporation of America (RCA), can again be seen in his Maryland hometown after a nearly twenty-year absence. On April 12, the Baltimore City Life Museums (BCLM) will host a grand opening for the Morton K. Blaustein City Life Exhibition Center, a permanent outdoor facility that will accommodate the oversized canine. Constructed in 1954 as an advertisement for an RCA distributor located on the outskirts of Baltimore, this statue of Nipper, which could be seen from one of the city's incoming roadways, served as a local landmark until 1976, when it was sold to an antique collector and moved out of the state. Last year, when the statue was again put up for sale, the BCLM made a public appeal to raise the \$25,000 purchase price. RCA itself was among the contributors.

SPACE-BASED ESPIONAGE

On March 11, cable television's Discovery Channel will air *Spies Above*, a documentary examining the history and proliferation of space-based espionage by the United States since the beginning of the Cold War era. Produced in cooperation with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO)—a top-secret intelligence department whose very existence was not confirmed until 1992,

BALTIMORE CITY LIFE MUSEUMS



32 years after its inception—the hour-long production uses recently declassified Corona satellite photos; presidential briefing boards; and first-person accounts from more than thirty agents, policymakers, generals, and scientists to explore key historical events in the development of stellar spying.

Narrated by Gillian Anderson of the science-fiction television program *The X-Files*, the film takes viewers inside such previously classified locations as the CIA's Operations Center, where on-duty members of "The Watch" analyze intelligence from human sources, imagery gathering, and communications interceptions; the National Photographic Interpretation Center, where imagery analysts study pictures of trouble spots around the world, passing their findings directly to the president; and the "Blue Cube," a windowless building that serves as the command center for U.S. space-based surveillance platforms.

NEW MEXICO, 1846-1996

A symposium scheduled for March 30 in Las Cruces and sponsored by the Doña Ana County Historical Society and New Mexico State University's Academy for Learning in Retirement will focus on the U.S. seizure from Mexico 150 years ago of the territory that in 1912 became the

state of New Mexico. In addition to examining the state's unique fusion of Indian, Hispanic, and Anglo cultures, noted scholars will discuss such topics as "Mexico and the U.S.-Mexico War," "The Mormons in New Mexico in 1846 and the Mormon Battalion," and "The Revolt of 1847." The event marks New Mexico's *Year of Destiny-1846*, during which U.S. troops occupied the region in the early days of the Mexican War (1846-1848). More than 800,000 acres of new territory, including what became New Mexico, was ceded to the United States under the terms of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in return for payment of \$15 million and cancellation of Mexican debts. For more information call 505-522-1194.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD

On April 13, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission will kick off a year of events, scheduled in celebration of the sesquicentennial of the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR), with a reenactment in the rotunda of the capitol building in Harrisburg of the 1846 signing of the line's charter. Numerous national historical societies, museums, preserva-



PHOTO BY STEVE MILLER

PRR GGI 4859 AT HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

tion groups, and scholars have scheduled educational and entertaining programs, demonstrations, exhibits, and interpretive presentations dealing with the railline throughout this anniversary year. To request a calendar of events call 717-687-8628. ★

AMERICAN GALLERY

art & artifacts

JOHN SINGLETON COPLEY IN ENGLAND

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas (713-639-7300), until April 28—features the work of John Singleton Copley

ment with an exhibition about women such as Abigail Adams (1744-1818), Phillis Wheatley (1753?-1784), and Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888), whose writings during their battle to abolish



THE DEATH OF MAJOR PEIRSON, 6 JANUARY 1781 BY JOHN SINGLETON COPLEY (1783)

(1738-1815), perhaps the finest portraitist of the colonial era, who was born in Boston, Massachusetts; settled in England in 1775; and gained international recognition. Centerpiece of the 41 masterpieces displayed is *The Death of Major Peirson, 6 January 1781*, painted in 1783, which recreates on canvas the heroism of the British troops, led by the mortally wounded Major Francis Peirson, who repulsed a French invasion force on the island of Jersey in the English Channel. This depiction of their Army's courage was highly acclaimed by a British population stung by the recent loss of the American colonies, which had won independence with the aid of the French.

TALKING RADICALISM IN A GREENHOUSE: WOMEN WRITERS AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Daughters of the American Revolution Museum, Washington, D.C. (202-879-3241), until April 30—celebrates the 75th anniversary of the nineteenth amend-

slavery laid the theoretical and philosophical foundation for the suffrage movement. The relationships between these eighteenth- and nineteenth-century women writers are explored through a selection of books, portraits, photographs, and personal items.

AMERICA'S SMITHSONIAN

The Kansas City Convention Center, Kansas (816-871-3700), March 19-May 27—hosts a display by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service in Washington, D.C., as part of the national museum complex's 150th anniversary celebration in 1996. The three hun-



RUBY SLIPPERS FROM THE WIZARD OF OZ

dred artifacts on view have been selected from the more than 140 million treasures in the collection. Included are George Washington's (1732-1799) sword; the hat Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) wore the night he was assassinated; a Thomas Edison (1847-1931) light bulb; the "ruby slippers" worn by Judy Garland (1922-1969) in the 1939 movie *The Wizard of Oz*; and works by such well-known American artists as George Catlin (1796-1872), John Singer Sargent (1856-1925), and Mary Cassatt (1845-1926). The exhibition will travel to ten cities throughout the United States.

IN THE EYE OF THE STORM: AN ART OF CONSCIENCE, 1930-1970

Greenville County Museum of Art, Greenville, South Carolina (803-271-7570), until March 31—explores the subject of social-commentary art in the twentieth century

through 62 paintings, prints, and drawings from the collection of Philip J. and Suzanne Schiller. The artworks are displayed in six sections: The Great Depression (1929-1941); The American Scene in the 1930s; The Issue of Race; The Rise of Fascism; The Horrors of War/The Danger of Peace; and Personal Statements. The exhibition will travel to Lincoln, Nebraska.

THE STORY OF VIRGINIA, AN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

The Virginia Historical Society, Richmond (804-358-4901), continuing—celebrates Virginia's colorful history since prior to the arrival of the Europeans in 1607. The exhibition traces the changing sense of identity of the residents from Englishmen to Virginians, to Americans, to southerners, to Confederates, and back to Virginians and Americans. Displays are arranged chronologically from

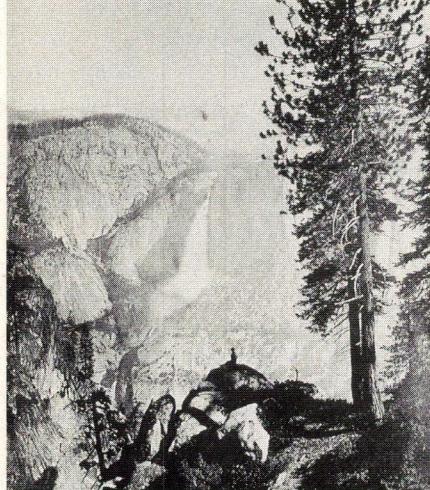


FATHER COUGHLIN (1939) BY BEN SHAHN

Old Dominion's indigenous cultures to twentieth-century Virginia politics. Displayed are gold buttons belonging to Pocahontas (1595-1617), a diary recorded by George Washington, and an 1830s Conestoga wagon.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE OLD WEST

St. Joseph's Indian School at the Akta Lakota Museum, Chamberlain, South Dakota (605-734-3455), until March 26—features the work of 17 nineteenth-century photographers who, through



FALLS OF YOSEMITE (1872) BY EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE

their cameras, undertook the role of historians of the American West. The eighty photographic images of the people, places, and events they documented encompass three themes—the natural environment; emigrants and indigenous peoples; and the romanticized view of the region. The exhibition will travel to Canyon, Texas.

NATIVE AMERICAN DESIGNS OF THE NORTHERN WOODLANDS

Hood Museum of Art, Hanover, New Hampshire (603-646-2808), until fall 1996—recognizes the artistry of the Northern Woodlands people in the early 1900s as evidenced by a collection of decorative clothing and accessories that reflect Euro-American influence on Native American design.

160 YEARS OF PAINTING FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE STATE MUSEUM

Louisiana State Museum, New Orleans (504-568-6968), continuing—highlights the museum's collection of artistically and historically significant paintings from the

Spanish, eighteenth-century colonial era to the twentieth century. The artworks demonstrate the skills of those painters who captured the evolution of Louisiana's diverse cultural landscape.

RUNS, HITS AND AN ERA: THE PACIFIC COAST LEAGUE 1903-1958

Autry Museum of Western Heritage, Los Angeles (213-667-2000), until May 12—examines the early years of West Coast baseball, when the Pacific Coast League dominated the region from Seattle to San Diego. The players, owners, fans, rivalries, and excitement associated with the game are portrayed through vintage uniforms, game equipment, trophies, banners, baseball cards, and more than 125 photographs. Rare film clips of games and videotaped interviews with former players, sports writers, and historians evoke a bygone era in the sport of baseball. The exhibition will travel to Seattle, Washington.

SAY AHH! EXAMINING AMERICA'S HEALTH

The Strong Museum, Rochester, New York (716-263-2700), until April 27—follows the swings of the medical pendulum from the nineteenth century, when it was believed that women risked a variety of maladies by reading romance novels and over-stimulating their emotions, to the twentieth-century lifestyle and diet modifications made by many Americans. Artifacts include a scarificator and cupping devices used for bloodletting; Dr. Macaura's Blood Circulator; a Violet Ray Generator, which guaranteed to restore vigor in tired skin and worn-out muscles; and advertisements and trade cards for patent medicines designed to cure a variety of ailments. The exhibition will travel to Cleveland, Ohio. ★



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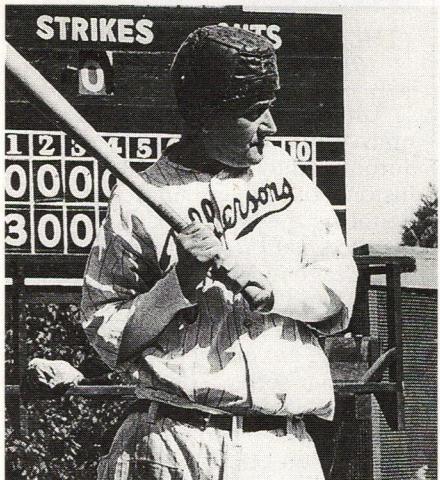
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MAILBOX

readers' letters

FIRST BATTING HELMET?

Our family greatly enjoyed your article on the "Birth of American Football" in the December 1995 issue, but for a rather unusual reason. My late father-in-law, Tony Marvier (below), organized a baseball team in 1915 at the Jefferson Playground in San Francisco. He was just 16 years old, and the team played every season until the 1960s when he became too ill to manage it any longer. The Jeffersons played against a number of other semi-pro teams



Du Roi wrote this while passing through our town of Simsbury, Connecticut, which he called "Simsburg." The previous night, he and other German officers "... gave the belles of the town [Suffield, Connecticut] a ball in the evening. Everyone, even the clergyman's wife, came and we danced until daybreak."

I have guessed that he soured on American women either because his German stomach couldn't accept the American food served the previous night at the ball or, perhaps, he found himself without a dancing partner willing to tolerate his arrogance.

Clavin Fisher
West Simsbury, Connecticut

LIST OF HESSIAN DIARIES AVAILABLE

A footnote to Debra Brill's fine article on the Hessians in the American Revolution [November/December 1995 issue] is that some of the returning German soldiers recorded their experiences in diaries and journals, some of which have been published and provide for fascinating reading.

A list of the diaries can be found in a

work edited by the undersigned: *German Allied Troops in the American Revolution: J. R. Rosengarten's Survey* (Heritage Books, Inc., 1993). As noted there (page 30), many of the soldiers "wrote of this country in a way that quickened emigration," and indeed, some of them after returning to Europe decided to return to America.

Also, it was noted in this work (page 3) that there is hardly "an old Pennsylvania or Maryland town or village, where Hessians and other German allied troops were quartered during their long imprisonment after Saratoga and Trenton and Yorktown, that there is not a family descended from a Hessian ancestor," as many of them settled in those particular areas.

Don Heinrich Tolzmann
Cincinnati, Ohio

LIBRARY THOROUGHLY AMERICAN

Your mention of the building of a Jefferson Davis Presidential Library, with ground-breaking ceremonies scheduled for this winter, gave me pause [January/February 1996 issue]. The envisioned edifice will be costly to the taxpayers of Mississippi, our most general-

ly indigent state. Yet there's something thoroughly American in the erection of such an athenaeum—an acknowledgement of courage and resolve in our most tragic domestic conflict.

William Dauenhauer
Wickliffe, Ohio

The editors regret that through a proof-reading oversight, we failed to correct an error that we introduced into a letter from Tim Korver of Hamilton, Ohio that appeared in our January/February "Mailbox." The last sentence of Mr. Korver's letter, which addressed "Why the South Lost the Civil War" [September/October 1995 issue], should have read: "All of these factors, to one degree or another, explains why the Confederates lost."

American History is now a member of CompuServe, an online service for electronic communication. E-mail letters and comments to the editors can be addressed to:
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The editors welcome comments from our readers. We endeavor to publish a representative sampling of correspondence but regret that limited space prevents us from printing every letter. Address correspondence to "Mailbox," American History, Box 8200, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105. ★

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HISTORY BOOKSHELF

continued from page 6

THAT DARK AND BLOODY RIVER: CHRONICLES OF THE OHIO RIVER VALLEY

by Allan W. Eckert (Bantam Books, 864 pages, \$27.95). In this book, Eckert dramatically chronicles the struggle between Europeans and Native Americans for control of the Ohio River Valley from about 1755 until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Based on the journals, letters, and reports of the first white settlers in the region, Eckert's work also includes fresh material bypassed in earlier accounts of the shaping of "that dark and bloody river leading into a dark and bloody land."

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JACKSON & LEE: LEGENDS IN GRAY. THE PAINTINGS OF MORT KÜNSTLER

text by James I. Robertson, Jr. (Rutledge Hill Press, 180 pages, \$34.95). Seventy-nine paintings by artist/illustrator Künstler are brought together to portray episodes in the lives of two of the Confederacy's leading generals, Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson (1824-1863) and Robert E. Lee (1807-1870). In his text, Robertson, one of today's leading Civil War historians, recounts the stories of these two famous men, who became legends of the American Civil War.

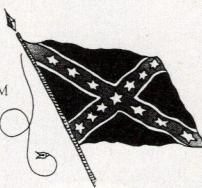
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FOR ALL MANKIND

(Voyager, \$39.95). Suspense and adventure unfold in this CD-ROM version (for Macintosh and Windows) of the story of the 24 American astronauts who went to the moon between 1968 and 1972. Presented are more than one hundred images from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration archives; the words, photographs, and biographies of the astronauts themselves; maps of lunar landing sites; and diagrams of spacecraft and equipment.

THE CURSE OF THE SOMERS: BILLY BUDD'S GHOST SHIP

(Somers Documentary Film, \$34.90). Suicide and disgrace, mutiny and murder, hangings and ghosts are the inspiration for this video account of the U.S. Brig *Somers*. Events that took place prior

to her sinking off the coast of Veracruz in 1846 during the Mexican War figured in the founding of the U.S. Naval Academy and gave author Herman Melville (1819-1891) the idea for his posthumously published novel *Billy Budd, Foretopman* (1924). A soundtrack of traditional nineteenth- century songs and sea chanties, and underwater footage by explorer and filmmaker George Belcher, who discovered the shipwreck in 1986, complement the historical narrative.

PATTON: A GENIUS FOR WAR

by Carlo D'Este (HarperCollins, 1,000 pages, \$35.00). Published on the fiftieth anniversary of the untimely death of General George Smith Patton, Jr. (1885-1945), this authoritative biography details the life of one of the most admired—and certainly the most controversial—American generals of World War II. Written with access to Patton's private and public papers, and with the cooperation of the general's family, the book recalls Patton's first days of life, when he was so sickly that his mother secretly had him baptized for fear he might not live; his schooling at West Point; his courtship and marriage to Beatrice Ayer; his military campaigns and rise to leadership in the U.S. Army; and his tragic death following a car accident in Germany shortly after the end of the war.

AMERICAN JOURNEY 1896-1945

(Ibis Communications, \$59.95). This CD-ROM for Windows is a photographic history of the events that shaped the nation through the first half of the twentieth century. The program's two hours of audio includes original speeches, interviews, and an eyewitness report of the U.S. landing on Iwo Jima. Photo essays offer insight into life during those trying times by focusing on the American West at the turn of the century; the Great Depression of the 1930s; and the U.S. home front during World War II. In addition to captured Japanese footage of the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, video clips provide glimpses of a Model T assembly line in Detroit; American troops in combat; and "The Great Train Robbery" of 1903. More than 1,300 printable historical photographs, maps, and charts are also featured. ★

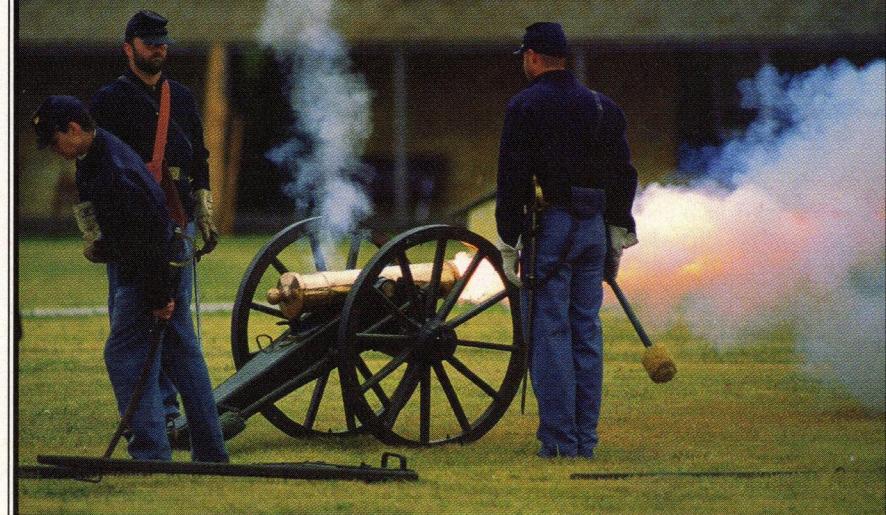
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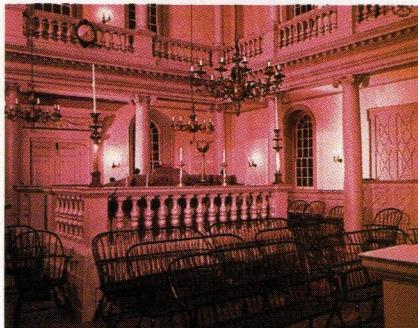


A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION

BY DAN VOGEL TWO POEMS BY EMMA LAZARUS ENDOWED NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND'S TOURO SYNAGOGUE AND THE STATUE OF LIBERTY WITH A SHARED THEME AND A SHARED SYMBOLISM.

STANDING unassumingly at the intersection of two old-style streets in Newport, Rhode Island, the Touro Synagogue is a fine example of compact, no-nonsense colonial design by Peter Harrison. With just enough embellishment to announce its purpose, it is not nearly as imposing a building as synagogues in larger cities. Yet, this modest structure casts a long, brotherly shadow that extends to the grandiose, world-renowned Statue of Liberty in New York harbor.

What connection could there possibly be between these two symbols of American freedom? Neither in size nor architecture, neither in age nor ostensible purpose, are they comparable. But, by one of those coincidences that make American history so fascinating, Emma Lazarus, the Jewish poet from New York, without the slightest intention of doing so, connected them by writing a poem for each. By a quirk of perverse prophecy—the poem on the synagogue was written in 1867; the one on Lady Liberty, 16 years later—she endowed them both with a shared theme and a shared symbolism.



Congregation Yeshuat at Israel (Salvation of Israel) was founded in Newport in 1658 by Jews who were, for the most part, of Sephardic extraction; that is, they followed the liturgy and customs of Jews of medieval Spain and Portugal. Forced at the end of the fifteenth century to convert to Christianity or face expulsion from those countries, many Jews of the Iberian Peninsula sought a haven from persecution in Brazil, Holland, or the West Indies. Then in 1654, some of their number sailed to North America.

In liberal Rhode Island, their welcome was quite a bit warmer than that given their coreligionists four years earlier in

Erected in 1759, the Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island, (above and right) is the oldest Jewish house of worship in the U.S. The serious decline in the Jewish population of Newport by the end of the eighteenth century caused the virtual closure of the simple but elegant synagogue, which was saved from deterioration by generous bequests from two brothers—Abraham and Judah Touro—with whose name it has since been linked.

BOTH PHOTOS BY JOHN T. HOPF





Dutch New Amsterdam (later New York) by its pompous, authoritarian governor, Peter Stuyvesant. The Rhode Island General Assembly in 1684 formalized their presence in a resolution, stating that "They may expect as good protection here as any strangers being not of our nation residing amongst us, in His Majesty's colony, ought to have, being obedient to His Majesty's laws."

At first, the Newport Jews worshipped in private homes. Requiring sanctified land in which to bury their deceased, the Jewish community purchased a plot for a cemetery in 1677. But it was another 81 years before they—through their own efforts and with the aid of brother congregations in New York, the West Indies, and England—acquired additional land on which to build their synagogue.

In 1759, the cornerstone was laid for what is today the oldest synagogue building in the United States.* Possibly as a reminder that old fears and distrust die hard, they built an escape tunnel under the *bimah* (Reader's platform)!

The Jews of Newport supported the American Revolution with money, ammunition, boats, and blood. Consequently, many had to flee the British-occupied city until the war's end. Then, in 1790 occurred one of those meaningful side-moments of history: Moses Seixas, the warden of the synagogue, wrote a congratulatory letter on behalf of the congregation to President George Washington, in which he eloquently emphasized

*Fifty years ago, in March 1946, the U.S. Department of the Interior designated the synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island, as a National Historic Site.

the gratitude of the Jewish congregation for the opportunity to help establish a government based upon freedom of religious practice.

In his famous reply of August 21, 1790, Washington reiterated Seixas's sentiments and even some of his phraseology. "For happily," wrote the president, "the Government of the united [sic.] States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support." In these ringing phrases, Washington expounded forevermore the grandeur of the American democratic enterprise.

Although Newport never recovered its commercial prosperity after the Revolutionary War, the town's Jews, many of whom were merchant shippers, persisted there for some time. Little by little, however, they had to move on to better commercial prospects. Ultimately, there were not even ten Jewish men—the minimum for communal worship—left in town, and the synagogue was virtually closed by the end of the eighteenth century.

In 1822, Abraham Touro, a successful businessman whose father, Isaac Touro, served as the synagogue's Cantor years earlier, left a \$10,000 bequest for the restoration of the deteriorating structure. When his brother Judah died 32 years later, he left a like amount to the synagogue for its upkeep and for a retaining wall around the property. The money left by the brothers was known as the "Touro Jewish Synagogue Fund," which may explain how the house of worship came to be referred to as the "Touro Synagogue."

When Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and his family arrived to spend the summer in Newport in 1852, the synagogue



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In a 1790 letter (top, right) to synagogue warden Moses Seixas, George Washington declared that the new United States "gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance . . ." The Statue of Liberty, dedicated in 1886, re-affirmed this pledge of religious tolerance for countless immigrants—such as the Russian Jews shown left—who sought refuge in America.

To the Hebrew Congregation in Newport
Rhode Island.

Gentlemen.

While I receive, with much satisfaction, your Address, replete with expressions of affection and esteem, I rejoice in the opportunity of informing you, that I shall always retain a grateful remembrance of the cordial welcome I experienced in my visit to Newport, from all classes of citizens.

The reflection on the days of difficulty and danger which our people is rendered the more sweet, from a consciousness that they are succeeded by days of uncommon prosperity and security. If we have wisdom to make the best use of the advantages with which we are now favored, we cannot fail, under the just administration of a good government, to become a great and a happy people.

The citizens of the United States of America have a right to appear themselves for having given to Mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy, a policy worthy of imitation. All profess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is, however, more than toleration is spoken of, as if it were by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. In highly

the government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection, should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their efficient support.

It would be inconsistent with the knowledge of my character not to know that I am pleased with your favorable opinion of my administration, and fervent wishes for my felicity. May the children of the stock of Abraham, who dwell on this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants, while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and figtree, and there shall be none to make him afraid. May the father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths, and make us all in our several vocations here, and in his own due time and way, eternally happy.

H. Wadsworth

more alive than the cemetery. In brooding solitude on the gentle rise at the juncture of two quiet streets, it seemed itself a tombstone to past glories of an ancient people, and the local Jewish community as well. The quiet edifice inspired Lazarus's poetically precocious daughter Emma (18 years old and already with a book of poems published) to write "In the Jewish Synagogue at Newport."

She probably had read Longfellow's poem in his 1858 collection; after all, he was the most popular poet of his day. And, it is not surprising that Emma, still absorbing influences from other poets, would ape the master's style; her poem's meter and rhyme scheme, and even imagery, are Longfellow's. She even echoed his elegy for her own Jewish race!

Emma too begins by contrasting the "noises" of the city and the sea with the silent synagogue:

and cemetery were used only occasionally for services and interments. In his diary for July 9, 1852, Longfellow described a visit to the cemetery. He was fascinated, he wrote, by the combination on the headstones of Spanish and Portuguese names—which he, as a professor of Romance languages, recognized easily—with names and epitaphs in Hebrew, the Biblical tongue, still alive, if only on tombstones.

He was inspired to write the poem "The Jewish Cemetery at Newport," but it was not a verse that came easily to him. It took two years and four versions before he was satisfied enough to publish it in *Putnam's Magazine* for July 1854, and again in *Birds of Passage* four years later.

The poem begins with the contrast of the noisy sea and streets with the quietude of the old cemetery. It then asks rhetorically how came these Jews to this place with their ancient language and modern Spanish names. This leads into a striking denunciation of churches and nations that have chased and destroyed Jews throughout the centuries. Longfellow refers in passing to the former greatness of the race, but his perception of its current

condition led him to lament in the closing lines of the poem:

But ah! what once has been shall be no more!
The groaning earth in travail and in pain
Brings forth its races, but does not restore,
And the dead nations never rise again.

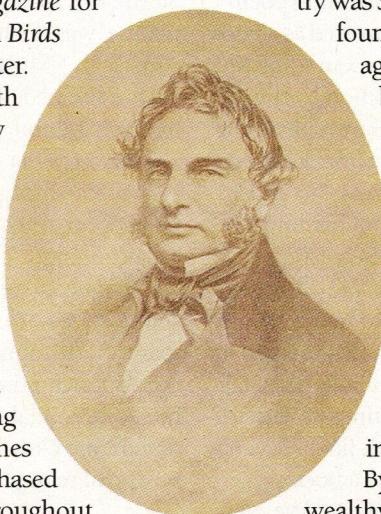
In sum, the Jewish cemetery at Newport had inspired an elegy for the Jewish people.

In New York, meanwhile, lived the Jewish Lazarus family. The father's ancestry was Sephardic, like that of the founders of the Newport synagogue; the mother's also, but through the crucible of centuries in Germany. By racial tradition, the family considered itself of the father's patrimony and were, therefore, members of the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue in New York, a patron of its brother institution in Newport.

By the time the rather wealthy Lazarus family came to pass the summer of 1867 among the upper-class, gentile summer residents of Newport, the synagogue was hardly



AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES, HEBREW UNION COLLEGE



The Jewish cemetery in Newport inspired two of America's poets, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (left) and Emma Lazarus (above), to compose elegies for what they saw as a dying Jewish race. Work with Jewish immigrants arriving in New York City caused a change of thought in Emma that was reflected in "The New Colossus," composed for the Statue of Liberty. Her moving poem interprets Frédéric Bartholdi's sculpture as a visual symbol of George Washington's pledge to the Newport synagogue almost a century before.

Here, where the noises of the busy town,

The ocean's plunge and roar can enter not,

We stand and gaze around with tearful awe,
And muse upon the consecrated spot.—

No signs of life are here: the very prayers

Inscribed around are in a language dead;

The light of the 'perpetual lamp' is spent

That an undying radiance was to shed—

Emma imagines kaleidoscopic scenes—the ancient "Eastern towns and temples," "the patriarch with his flocks," the triumphant Exodus from Egypt, the glorious giving of the Law on "sky-kissed" Sinai, "the rich court of royal Solomon." But then she leaps to the exile in Babylon, and finally back to the latest monument to exile, the Newport synagogue, now deserted, redolent of an illustrious, but obsolescent past:

Nathless the sacred shrine is holy yet,

With its lone floors where reverent feet once trod.

Take off your shoes as by the burning bush,

Before the mystery of death and God.

Her poem, too, is an elegy for a people and a community.

But the mysterious ways of God rolled on in Lazarus's destiny, with a dose of didactic irony. Busy with a career of writing conventional verses for popular magazines and thus gaining recognition, she only occasionally and reluctantly turned attention to her Jewish connection. Fate, however, was now to reach out a hand once more and tap her creativity.

In the very early 1880s, wide-spread pogroms in Germany and Russia propelled thousands of refugee Jews to New York. At first, Emma's social class of old-time Sephardi and German Jews who had "made it" in America could not relate to these Jews of strange costume, "primitive" religion, uncouth demeanor, and guttural tongue (Yiddish). Presently, however, feelings of guilt over-

whelmed this elite Jewish society of New York. With American-born initiative, they organized agencies to help and to re-educate their coreligionists.

Among these activists was Emma Lazarus. Her particular project was the organization of the Hebrew National Institute, where teenage boys learned Eng-

New World's rising colossus in New York harbor. And she names Frédéric Bartholdi's gigantic lady with the torch "Mother of Exiles," who is crying "with silent lips"

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to
breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming
shore;
Send these, the homeless, tem-
pest-tost to me;
I lift my lamp beside the golden
door!

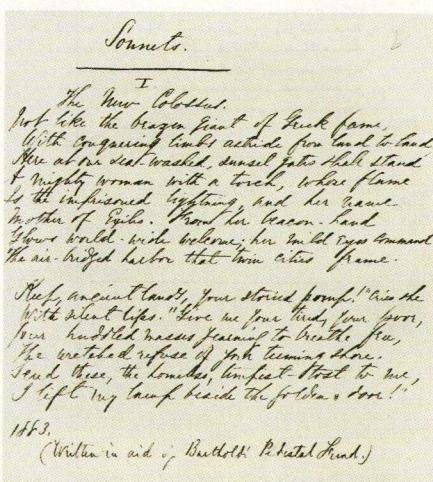
Lazarus interpreted the statue, not as "Liberty Enlightening the World," France's gift on the occasion of the centennial of America's Declaration of Independence in 1876, but as the visual symbol of Washington's declaration to the Jews of Newport, Rhode Island, back in 1790.

James Russell Lowell, an eminent American poet, critic, and editor, wrote to her, "your sonnet gives its subject a *raison d'être* which it wanted before quite as much as it wants a pedestal. You have set it on a noble one, saying admirably just the right word to be said, an achievement more arduous than that of the sculptor."

Emma was in Europe when the Statue was dedicated on October 28, 1886. A little more than a year later, on November 19, 1887, the 38-year-old poet died of Hodgkin's disease. Her poem was engraved on a tablet affixed in 1903 to the base of the statue, where it hung until 1945. Following the restoration of the Statue of Liberty during the 1980s, the plaque was installed in the revamped American Museum of Immigration within the pedestal that had occasioned its composition.

Thus Emma Lazarus, unwittingly prophetic through her own growth of perception, transcended time, place, and purpose, and connected the modest synagogue at Newport with the mighty statue at New York. In an ironic way, she made both monuments attestations to the American dream of ethnic opportunity and equality in a free society, a dream that clearly resulted in a great and powerful reality. ★

Dan Vogel has a particular interest in American literature and is a professor of English at Michlalah—The Jerusalem College in Israel.



BETTMANN ARCHIVE

lish and the use of tools. What Emma came to realize in the actual experience of working with the immigrants was that America was acting out its traditional welcome to newcomers from all nations and that this particular stream of immigrants—the flotsam of her own people, whom she once had eulogized—were imbued with the mystery of God, but by no means with the mystery of death.

The turning point in her life was a poem she called "The New Ezekiel," reprising for her times the prophet's major poetic image—the re-inspiration of the dry bones in the valley into a thriving people. No elegy, this is a resurrection poem.

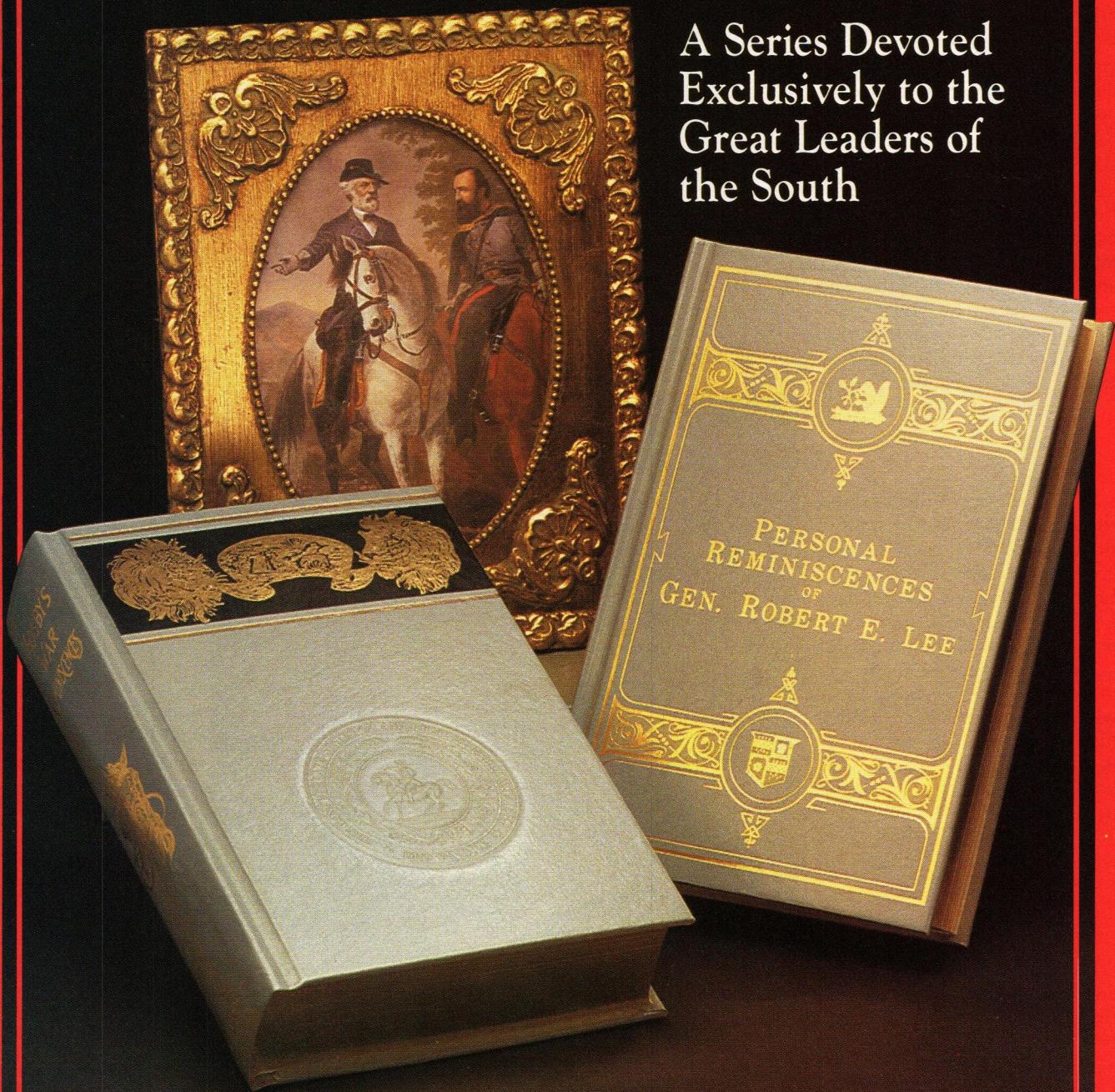
In 1883, when she was invited as a popular poet to contribute a poem to be put up for sale at a literary auction by the Art Loan Exhibition for the Bartholdi Statue Pedestal Committee, she at first demurred because she could not write "to order," but a theme in the depths of her mind resisted sublimation. So when Constance Cary Harrison, a member of the fundraising committee, appealed to her emotions by asking her to imagine how the Russian Jews would feel when they spied the Statue of Liberty for the first time, "Her dark eyes deepened—her cheek flushed," and she promised to contribute a poem.

The result was her sonnet, "The New Colossus," in which she contrasts the destruction of the Old World's Colossus astride the harbor of Rhodes with the

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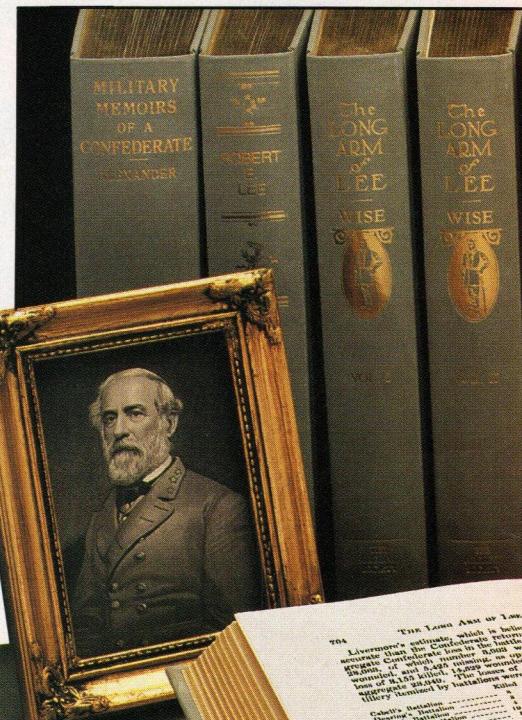
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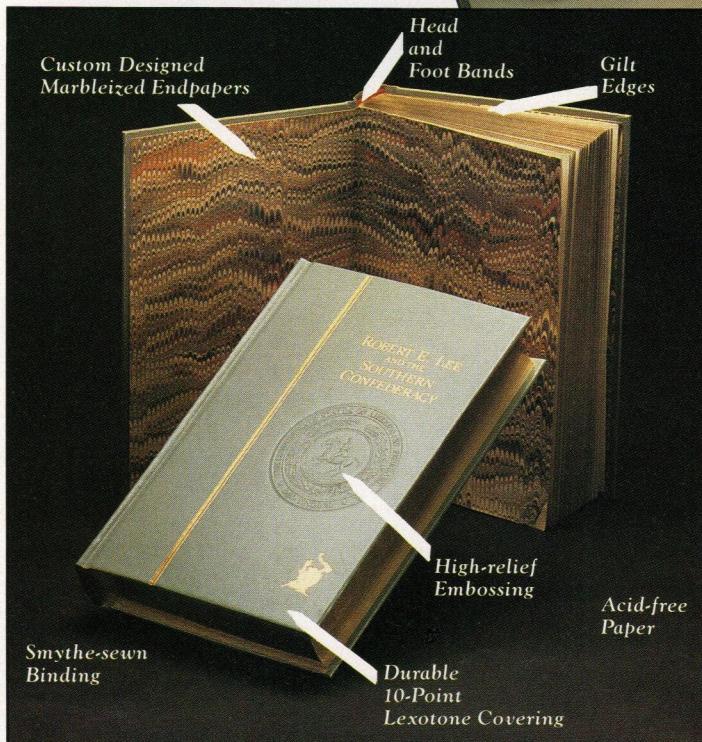


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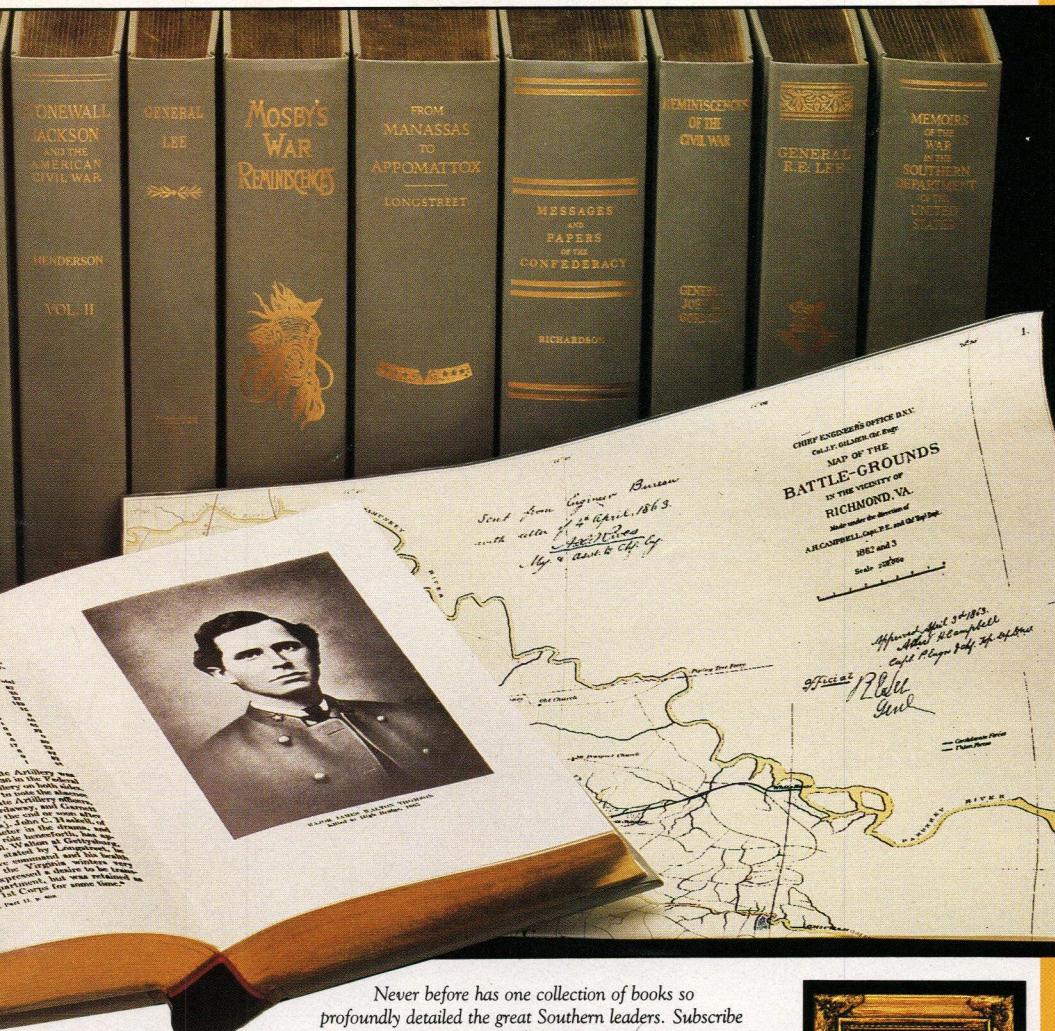
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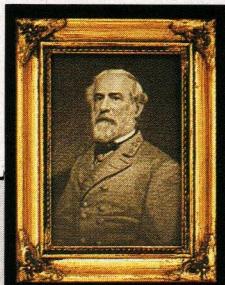
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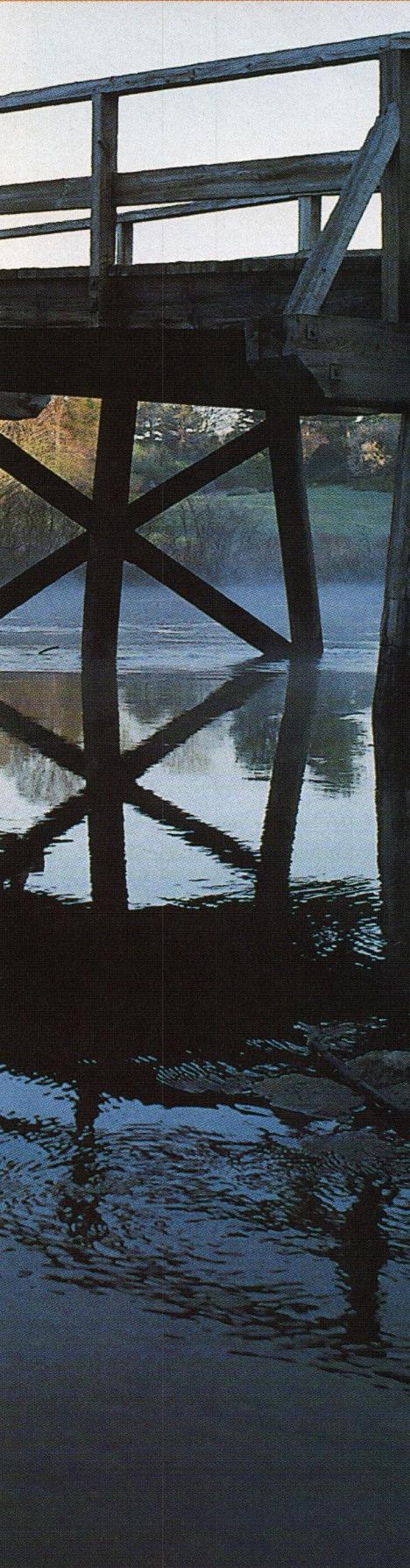
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THE FIRST TO DIE

BY JEANNE MUNN BRACKEN MINUTEMAN ISAAC DAVIS, SHOT BY THE BRITISH AT CONCORD BRIDGE IN APRIL 1775, WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO DIE IN THE CAUSE OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

"THERE CAN NEVER BE but one man who headed the first column of attack on the King's troops in the Revolutionary War. And Isaac Davis was that man." So spoke Reverend James Trask Woodbury of Acton, Massachusetts, in 1851. The occasion was a debate in the Massachusetts House of Representatives "upon the question of granting two thousand dollars to aid the Town of Acton in building a monument over the remains of Captain Isaac Davis, Abner Hosmer, and James Hayward, Acton Minute Men killed at Concord Fight, April 19, 1775."

Strictly speaking, Davis was not the first to die in the struggle for American independence. He was not even the first to die that bright April morning when the king's troops,

marching to Lexington and Concord to seize the rebel leaders and destroy the arms and ammunition stockpiled there, fired what poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow immortalized as the "shot heard 'round the world."

The colonists had been keeping an eye on the British troops quartered in Boston. They had noticed unusual activity that suggested the king's men planned to strike out into the villages to capture those who would lead their neighbors into open revolt and to seize the guns, field pieces, powder, and flour they had hidden around the countryside.

Samuel Adams and John Hancock, staying with Reverend Jonas Clarke at Lexington, had to be warned. That difficult chore fell to Paul Revere and William Dawes, joined later by young Doctor Samuel Prescott, who was returning home from a visit with his lady friend in Lexington.

After the alarm carried by the three



NEIL JOHNSON PHOTOGRAPHY

The body of Captain Isaac Davis, who died while leading the minutemen of Acton, Massachusetts, in the skirmish with British troops at Concord Bridge (left) in April, 1775, is buried beneath a monument (above) erected by the town in 1851.



A series of paintings attributed to Amos Doolittle, a militiaman from Connecticut, crudely captured the events of April 19, 1775 at Lexington and Concord. Here, the British commanders, Major John Pitcairn and Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith, survey the scene from the cemetery in Concord as their troops march into the town.

reached Lexington, then Concord, messengers fanned through the countryside warning the scattered farmers that the British were on the march. An unknown rider, perhaps Prescott himself, arrived at the home of Captain Joseph Robbins, leader of one of Acton's two troops of militia—soldiers supposedly under allegiance to the king, although that had ceased to be the case.

The messenger did not dismount, but banged on the corner of the house, shouting "Captain Robbins! Captain Robbins! Up! Up! The regulars have come to Concord! Rendezvous at old North Bridge quick as possible! Alarm Acton!"

Aroused from his bed, Robbins fired three shots with his musket to warn the town. Then he sent his 13-year-old son John to alert Isaac Davis and others. When he received the news, Davis sent word that he would leave for Concord as soon as thirty men had mustered in his yard.

The call echoed around Acton and the minutemen rushed to Davis's yard, where they made bullets and prepared for a battle that some, making jokes about finally "getting a hit at old [General Thomas] Gage," relished. Davis rebuked his men, reminding them that the day had brought "a most eventful crisis for the colonies. Blood would be spilt, that was certain; the crimson fountain would be opened; none could tell when it would close, nor with whose blood it would overflow. Let every man gird himself for battle and be not afraid, for God is on our side."

As certain as Davis was about the righteousness of their cause, he was equally pessimistic about his own chances for survival. Several days before

that fateful dawn, he and his wife had returned home from an excursion to discover that a large owl, a symbol of death, had flown into the house and perched on Davis's favorite gun, which hung over the mantel. No one was allowed to disturb the brooding presence, which stayed for days and was interpreted by the captain as an omen that, if the struggle became a full-pitched battle, he would not survive.

What kind of man was this Isaac Davis, and how did he come to lead the group of men who would march down the Concord path and into the history books?

The thirty-year-old son of Ezekiel and Mary Gibson Davis, Isaac was a gunsmith by trade and lived with his wife Hannah and children in the small farming village of Acton, a town that had broken away from Concord four decades earlier. A "thoughtful, sedate, serious man, a genuine Puritan like Samuel Adams," Davis was said to have been so moved by a Sunday sermon on the state of the colonies that he applauded at its conclusion and

asked the minister to repeat it.

Some months before this April day, Davis had been elected captain of Acton's company of minutemen. Thomas Thorpe—one of his men—would later swear in a deposition that the captain was "esteemed, a man of courage and prudence and had the love and veneration of all his company."

Thanks to his trade as a gunsmith, Davis's troops were fully equipped with guns, cartridge boxes, and bayonets. They drilled regularly, assembling twice a week (their efforts were noted by their fellow townsmen, who voted to pay them for their training).

Now, in response to the messenger's call to arms, Davis rallied about thirty men in his yard. Some of them had floured their hair while they waited so that they might meet the king's troops as gentlemen. Finally, Davis ordered his company into line and stepped off down the path.

As they reached the road, he halted his men and turned back toward his wife,

who was watching from the doorway of the house where their four young children lay sick. Taking one last look at Hannah, he admonished her to "Take good care of the children." Then he was gone.

The company marched up the lane and over Nashoba Brook by an old stone bridge to Strawberry Hill and then into neighboring Concord. Their thoughts

farm, where a contingent of redcoats was breaking up gun carriages and setting the pieces afire in the yard. But Davis's orders had been to rendezvous at the bridge, so the Acton men passed by, marching between newly-plowed fields planted with a strange crop indeed—hidden cannon and muskets!

When the Acton company arrived at the colonial forces' gathering place on Punkatasset Hill above the bridge, the men took their places at the extreme left of the line (the company's place dictated by the fact that

Davis was the most junior officer present). While the men waited, their captain hurried farther up the hill to a meeting with fellow officers to decide on a course of action.

As Colonel Barrett and the others conferred, they were unaware that when General Gage's British troops arrived at Lexington Common earlier that day during the pre-dawn hours, they had found several dozen defiant rebels waiting

continued on page 62

**"AS CERTAIN AS DAVIS WAS about the
righteousness of his cause, he was equally
pessimistic about his own chances for survival."**

must have been sobering, for they knew that if their cause failed, their defiance would brand them as traitors. Undeterred, Davis was heard to say as they walked: "I have a right to go to Concord on the king's highway, and I will go to Concord." Fifer Luther Blanchard and drummer Francis Barker struck up the company's signature tune, "The White Cockade," as they strode along.

Shortly after entering Concord, they paused near Colonel James Barrett's

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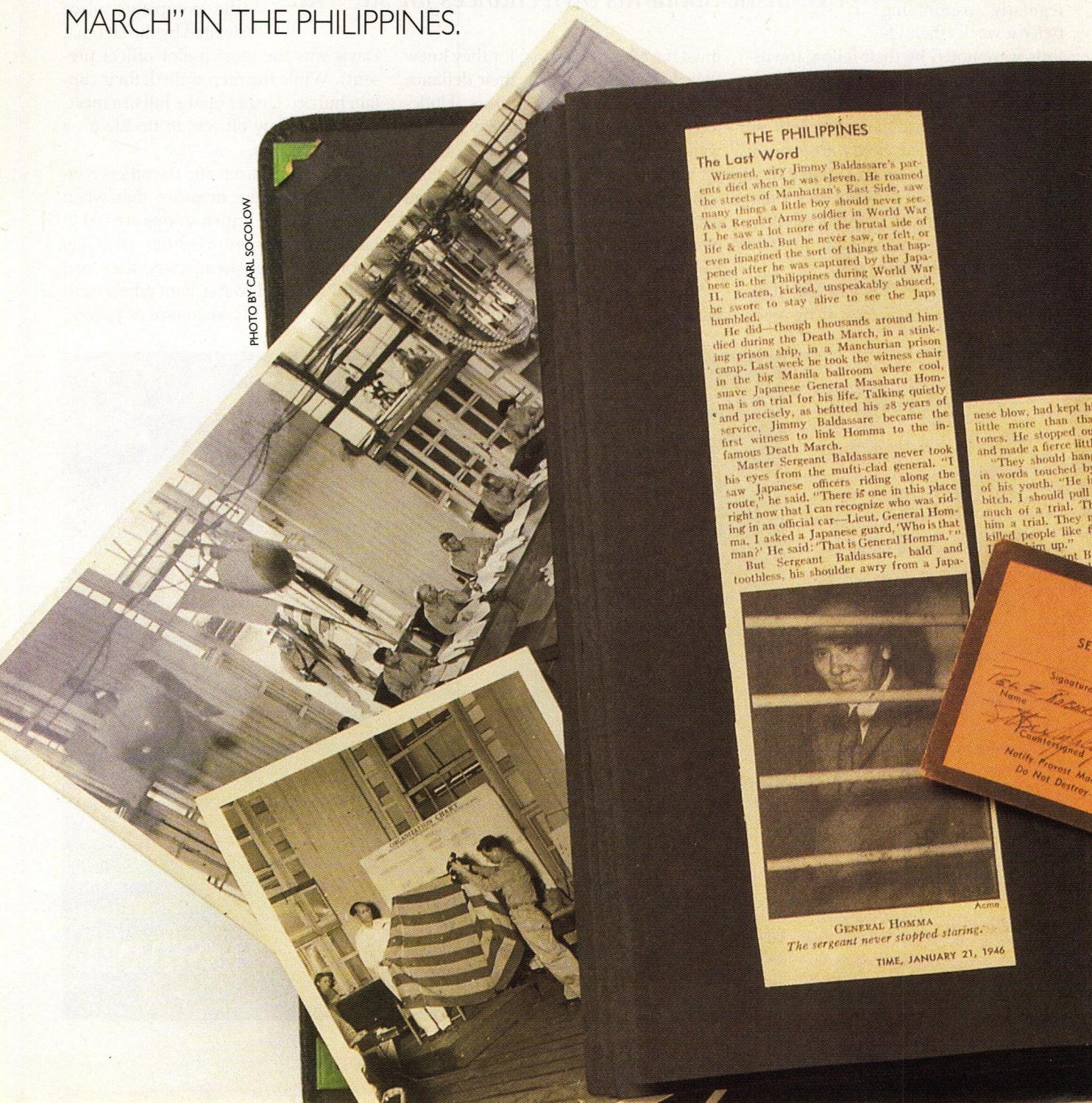
PENNSYLVANIA

Tom Ridge, Governor, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

BEAST OF BATAAN

BY PETER B. COOK EARLY IN 1946, SIX YOUNG AMERICAN LAWYERS DID THEIR BEST TO DEFEND GENERAL HOMMA MASAHARU FOR WAR CRIMES COMMITTED BY THE JAPANESE DURING THE 1942 "DEATH MARCH" IN THE PHILIPPINES.

PHOTO BY CARL SOCOLOW



THE PHILIPPINES

The Last Word

Wizened, wiry Jimmy Baldassare's parents died when he was eleven. He roamed the streets of Manhattan's East Side, saw many things a little boy should never see. As a Regular Army soldier in World War I, he saw a lot more of the brutal side of life & death. But he never saw, or felt, or even imagined the sort of things that happened after he was captured by the Japanese in the Philippines during World War II. Beaten, kicked, unspeakably abused, he swore to stay alive to see the Japs humbled.

He did—though thousands around him died during the Death March, in a stinking prison ship, in a Manchurian prison camp. Last week he took the witness chair in the big Manila ballroom where cool, suave Japanese General Masaharu Homma is on trial for his life. Talking quietly and precisely, as beffited his 28 years of service, Jimmy Baldassare became the first witness to link Homma to the infamous Death March.

Master Sergeant Baldassare never took his eyes from the multi-clad general. "I saw Japanese officers riding along the route," he said. "There is one in this place right now that I can recognize who was riding in an official car—Lieut. General Homma, I asked a Japanese guard, 'Who is that man?' He said: 'That is General Homma.'"

But Sergeant Baldassare, bald and toothless, his shoulder awry from a Japa-

nese blow, had kept his little more than that tones. He stopped on and made a fierce little

"They should hang in words touched by

of his youth. "He is

bitch. I should pull

much of a trial. They n

killed people like f

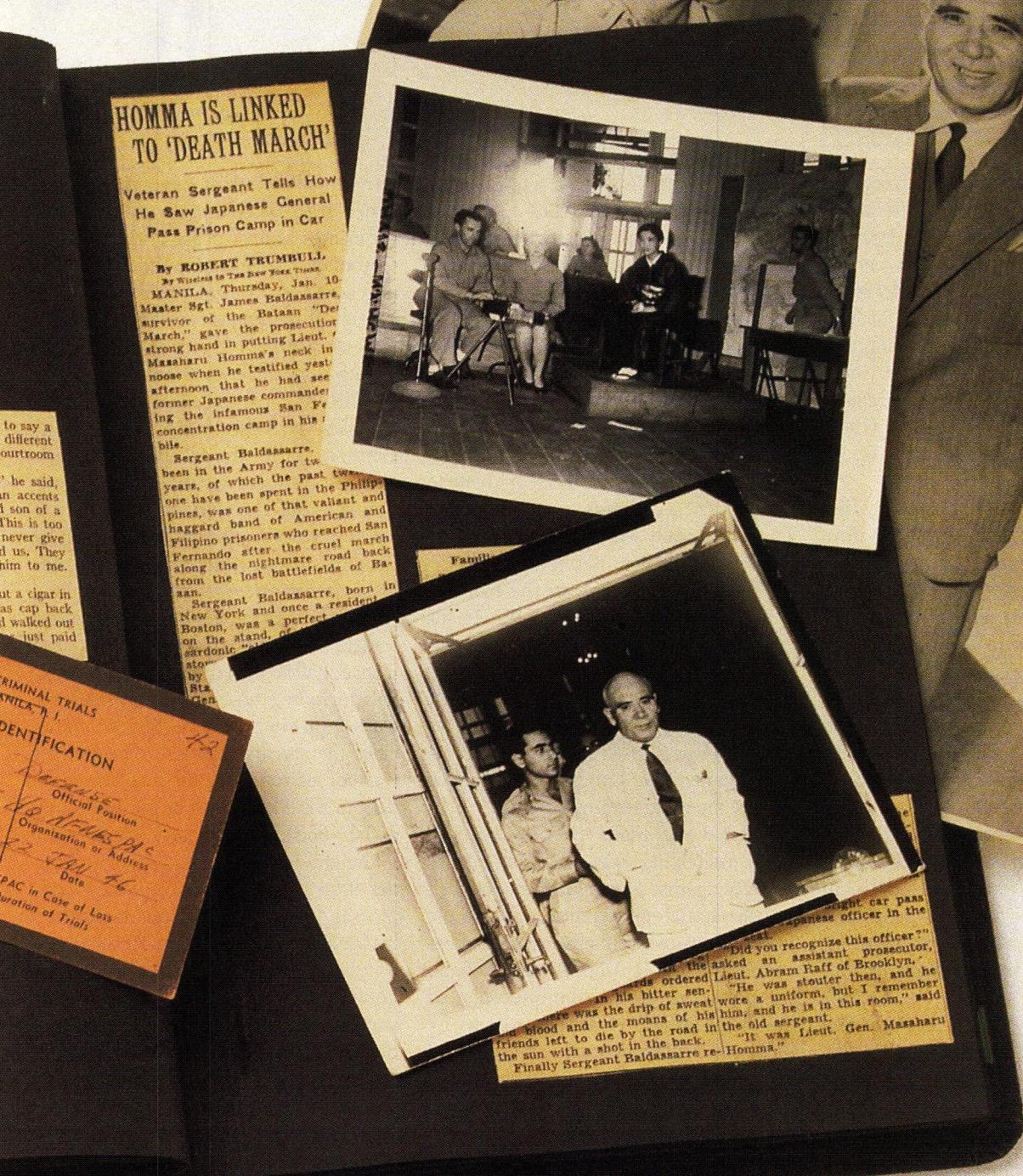
I'm him up."

GENERAL HOMMA
The sergeant never stopped staring.

TIME, JANUARY 21, 1946

ON DECEMBER 13, 1945, from his post near Manila, in the Philippines, 27-year-old Major John Skeen wrote to his wife Dorothy to say that he finally seemed to have enough points to be rotated home to Baltimore. There was just one hitch: "Headquarters wants me for a three weeks' detail. I pray they are not wrong in their estimate . . . No one has told me what the job is to be, but I did find out it was because I had been a lawyer. I therefore suspect the war crimes trials &

While Lieutenant Robert Pelz was helping to defend General Homma in Manila, a friend back home kept a scrapbook for him of the coverage the case received in local newspapers. On his return to the U.S., Pelz added his own mementos and photographs, creating a unique record of his memorable assignment.





U.S. NAVAL HISTORICAL CENTER



U.S. NAVAL HISTORICAL CENTER

Japanese bombing of the Philippines began within hours of their December 7, 1941 attack on U.S. bases at Pearl Harbor. Two days after the Japanese Army landed on Luzon later that month, General Homma, commander of the Japanese invasion of the Philippines (above, left), stepped ashore at Santiago in Lingayen Gulf. Homma reviewed the Japanese Army's victory parade (above, right), held in Manila to celebrate the fall of Corregidor in May 1942.

shiver at the thought" Two days later, Jack Skeen had the word. "Within one minute," he wrote Dorothy, "I became 'essential,' screwed, and famous."

During the next two months, the young major, who had never argued a case in court, would play a key role in an episode of legal history that would dominate headlines and newsreels around the world and resonate for decades to come. Jack Skeen had just been made chief defense counsel for the war-crimes trial of General Homma Masaharu, the notorious "Beast of Bataan"—commander of the terrible "March of Death" in April and May of 1942—whose men had caused the deaths of tens of thousands of Filipinos and American prisoners and internees.

"After a few days I will recover from the shock and will give the S.O.B. everything possible in the way of defense," Skeen wrote his wife. "They tell me he speaks fluent English, which will help."

But Jack Skeen didn't have a few days to recover. Major General Leo Donovan, head of the military tribunal, wanted to schedule Homma's arraignment in two days.

Skeen had not even met his defense team, which included Lieutenant Robert Pelz of New York City, who had also just celebrated his 27th birthday in the Philippines. He, too, was ready to go home; the war was over, and there wasn't much for a young law-school graduate to do. "I'd been overseas for a year and a half, and I really wanted to get back," he recalled in a recent interview.

With his assignment to the Homma trial, the New Yorker soon got over his disappointment about the delay in getting home. He was excited by the idea of being part of such a high-visibility courtroom event. "As a matter of fact," he recalled, "I was pleased . . . as long as I was going to be there, I might as well be doing the most interesting work."

What would make the work particularly interesting was that war-crimes charges against general officers, as well as the actual perpetrators of specific atrocities, were essentially unheard of before World War II. Allied leaders, however, spurred by reports of unprecedented and wide-ranging patterns of cruelty by German and Japanese invaders, decided that the men at the top would be held responsible. The very highest military and political leaders would be judged by in-

ternational tribunals (eventually convened in 1946 at Nuremberg and Tokyo) for crimes against peace and humanity. Commanding officers in the field would also stand trial in military courts of the aggrieved nations for ordering, permitting, or carrying out atrocities and other violations of the laws of war.

With the Japanese surrender, General Douglas MacArthur, appointed Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, took over responsibility for the Allied occupation of Japan. The world was watching to see with what toughness and dispatch he would dismantle Japanese militarism; one of his immediate concerns was fulfilling the pledge from the 1945 meeting of Allied leaders in Potsdam, Germany, that "stern justice shall be meted out to all war criminals, including those who have visited cruelties upon our prisoners." MacArthur decided that the first Japanese to be tried for war crimes would be the area commanders in the Philippines at the beginning and the end of the war in the Pacific.

General Homma Masaharu, commander of the Japanese invasion of the Philippines in 1941-2, was high on MacArthur's list for a speedy conviction. Another priority was General Yamashita Tomoyuki, known as the "Tiger of Malaya" for his stunning capture of Singapore from the British in 1942. He had just surrendered in the Philippines, where he had overseen a doomed Japanese delaying action during the last ten months of the war that had

produced tens of thousands of Filipino civilian deaths.

First Yamashita and then Homma would be tried before military tribunals convened in Manila under MacArthur's authority. Both would be charged with responsibility for atrocities against American prisoners and against thousands of Filipino soldiers and civilians for whom MacArthur felt a special responsibility.

The trial of General Yamashita was underway by October 29 and ended on December 7 with the expected conviction and sentence of death by hanging; the next week a commission was appointed to deal with General Homma.

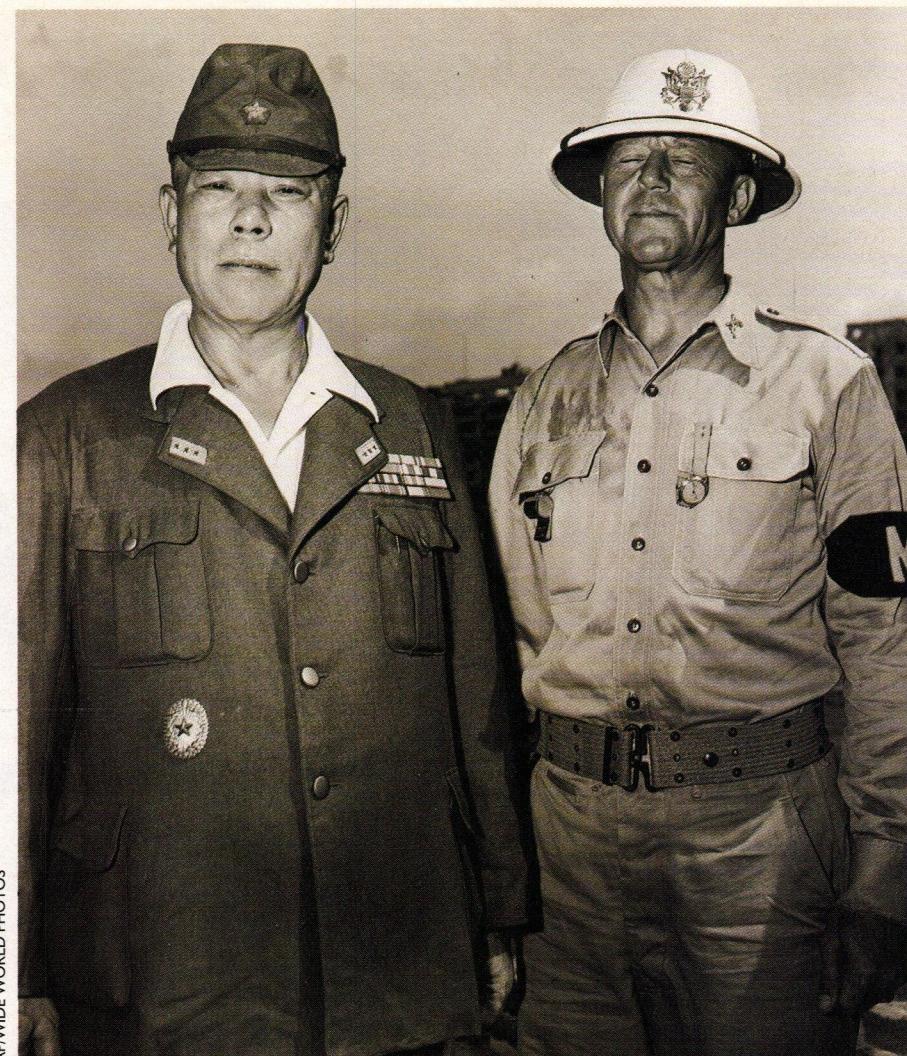
Not only did Jack Skeen and his Homma defense team lack time for preparation, but as Pelz observed, "General Homma was not getting a team of experienced criminal lawyers to defend him. . . . [T]he reason that Jack Skeen was the head of the team was that he was a major. It had nothing to do with his experience as a lawyer."

In addition to Skeen and Pelz, four other officers were appointed to the team. Lieutenant Leonard Nataupsky was a recent graduate of law school; Captains George Ott and Frank Coder were a few years older and had practiced law before they went into the army, but were not trial lawyers; the sixth member of the team, Captain George Furness, had the most experience, but he had never tried criminal cases.

The inexperience of the Homma defense team was not simply the luck of the draw. MacArthur, under whose orders the judges and the prosecution and defense teams were appointed, the rules of evidence approved, and who would review personally the verdicts and the sentences, had just suffered a setback from the team defending Yamashita; and he was determined not to let it happen again.

Yamashita had been convicted and sentenced, to be sure; but the experienced, capable defense team, headed by a full colonel, had not only blocked MacArthur's push for a speedy execution, they had appealed the case to the United States Supreme Court.

MacArthur was clearly angry that lawyers working for him took this military matter outside the military system. He was determined that more such legal maneuvers by enthusiastic "legal eagles" not jeopardize his ambitious agenda for rebuilding postwar Japan. He knew that



crucial support for him and his program from Washington and the Allies depended on his ability to discredit and eliminate, quickly and decisively, the remnants of Japanese militarism. MacArthur had gone to great lengths to protect Emperor Hirohito from prosecution as a war criminal; now he required swift, well-publicized convictions and executions in these trials of generals to demonstrate his resolve.

Further, he expected the trials of Yamashita and Homma to be *pro forma* events, given the overwhelming evidence that widespread atrocities had taken place in the Philippines. The prosecution had been working for months lining up witnesses and taking statements. Defense lawyers were expected to realize that these proceedings were designed to punish the guilty, not to engage in a lengthy search for "truth." And, the lawyers were not to get in the way or delay things by questioning procedures or otherwise making things

General Yamashita Tomoyuki (above, left) commanded the Japanese troops who thwarted the retaking of the Philippines by the Americans under General Douglas MacArthur in 1944-45. The first Japanese military leader tried for war crimes, Yamashita claimed no responsibility for the atrocities committed against Filipinos by troops under his command. He was hanged in 1946 following the upholding of his conviction by the U.S. Supreme Court.

complicated for the tribunal commissions. In a wire to General William Styler, who was charged with setting up the tribunals, MacArthur said he did not care who was convicted first, Yamashita or "small fry"; what was important was to get things moving right away and to complete the process with dispatch.

Jack Skeen and Bob Pelz had heard that MacArthur was furious that Yamashita's defense team behaved more like lawyers than like U.S. Army men under his com-



AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

The commission charged with hearing the case against Homma included: seated, Major General Basilio Valdes of the Philippine Army, Major General Leo Donovan, and Brigadier General Robert Gard; standing, Brigadier General Arthur Trudeau and Brigadier General Warren McNaught.

mand. Young Major Skeen, whose father was a respected Baltimore attorney, was outraged. He wrote home that "Everyone concerned in the trial, i.e. commission, prosecution & defense is under Gen'l MacArthur. When the trial is over it is Gen'l MacArthur who reviews the proceedings & approves the sentence. The final straw is that the accused is a man who defeated our Gen'l in battle . . . [N]o man could receive a fair trial under this set-up." He added that he was "glad that I am close enough to getting out of the Army so that I can keep my conscience clear by doing everything possible to see that the true facts are presented."

One of the legal issues that had to be addressed in these trials was that the charges were based on an unprecedented interpretation of command responsibility, one that made a commanding officer responsible for the criminal actions of his men, whether or not those actions were counter to his orders or policy, whether or not he condoned them, and whether or not he knew they had taken place. The prosecution argument was in essence that these criminal actions were so widespread wherever the Japanese Army went that no commanding officer could really be unaware that they were taking place. No one had ever been charged with a capital offense in an American court on such a premise.

As the U.S. Supreme Court reluctantly agreed to hear arguments in the Yamashita case, Skeen, Pelz, and the rest of their team set out to do the best they could to provide a defense for General Homma. They had three days before the arraignment. In describing their first

meeting with their client in his diary for December 16, Pelz noted that Homma "looked like a tired-out grandfather who has girded his loins for a last battle . . . [and] avers he knew nothing of these atrocities. As he put it, only an Oriental can understand that a Jap general does not question the actions of his subordinates . . . [I]f the general hangs, it will be by a sort of *ex post facto* rule as to proper military ethics."

The 57-year-old Homma was a far cry from the "Japanese warlord" that Pelz had expected. Rather, he appeared to be a complex person, with an unusual world view for a Japanese of his generation. Early in his career, he had spent three years in England as a military attaché. Not only did he speak fluent English, he also was drawn to Western ideas and culture, especially American movies. Homma also had a tumultuous personal life, with moments of romantic excess and depression that called into question his self-discipline to such an extent as to have jeopardized his



AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

military career. People who knew him said that only his second marriage, to a lovely, level-headed divorcee, saved his career and perhaps his life. Just the same, he was in many ways an "old soldier," recognized as a brilliant tactician and a leader well regarded by his subordinates.

Within a few months of his victory in the Philippines, Homma had been relieved of his command, ordered back to Japan, and removed from combat duty. He and his supporters cited his opposition to the policies of War Minister Tojo Hideki and his "soft" attitude toward the people whose country he was occupying as reasons for this early and sudden retirement.

The Allies' charges against Homma stemmed from the Bataan Death March and conditions in prisoner-of-war camps that resulted in thousands more deaths. He was also charged for bombing Manila in the last days of 1941, after General MacArthur had apparently declared it an open city, and for his refusal

to accept the surrender of General Jonathan Wainwright (left in command after MacArthur's departure) in May, 1942. But it was the mistreatment of Filipino and American prisoners by soldiers under his general command that had earned General Homma his place at the top of the list of those to be tried.

The Japanese invasion of the Philippines was a bloody campaign that began within days of their December 1941 bombing of Pearl Harbor and lasted until early May 1942. Homma's 14th Army eventually defeated the under-prepared and under-equipped U.S. troops of General MacArthur and the hastily incorporated Philippine defense forces whom he had only recently begun to train. At the end of the campaign, which saw the Fil-American forces backed into the southern tip of the Bataan Peninsula with no hope of reinforcement or resupply, somewhere between seventy and eighty thousand men were surrendered to the Japanese, whose intelligence had led them to

The prosecution called dozens of American and Filipino witnesses to testify to the horrors of the Bataan Death March and the prisoner-of-war camps to which it led. The testimony of Sergeant James Baldassarre (shown with pointer in above photo) of Brooklyn, New York, that he saw General Homma drive by the march route was among the most damaging to the Japanese commander's case.

expect about half that number.

The infamy that followed, during which these prisoners were forced to move, almost entirely on foot, some sixty miles north to the nearest railhead, came to be called the "Death March" of Bataan. Seven thousand Filipino and American prisoners died from exhaustion, insufficient food and water, lack of medical supplies, and brutal treatment—including summary execution—at the hands of their Japanese captors. Once the railhead was gained, the prisoners were shunted to a number



COURTESY OF ROBERT L. PEZZ

of camps where appalling conditions and dreadful treatment resulted in thousands more deaths.

Bataan became a rallying cry for Allied forces from the moment General MacArthur, ordered by his superiors to leave the Philippines before the surrender in order to organize the campaign to retake the Pacific, uttered his famous "I shall return." (Each of MacArthur's personal planes throughout the war was named "Bataan.") When scattered reports of the Death March filtered out soon after it had taken place, Homma became known to Allied soldiers throughout the Pacific Theater as "The Beast of Bataan."

The retaking of the Philippines was also a bloody and protracted affair. In late 1944 and early 1945, U.S. forces, with the support of widespread Filipino guerrilla activity, recaptured most of the Philippine Islands, except for a section of northwest Luzon, where newly-assigned General Yamashita and what was left of the Japanese 14th Area Army had taken up defen-

sive positions. Yamashita's mission, with no resources to stage a counteroffensive, was to hold out as long as possible in order to help delay the inevitable Allied attack on the main islands of Japan.

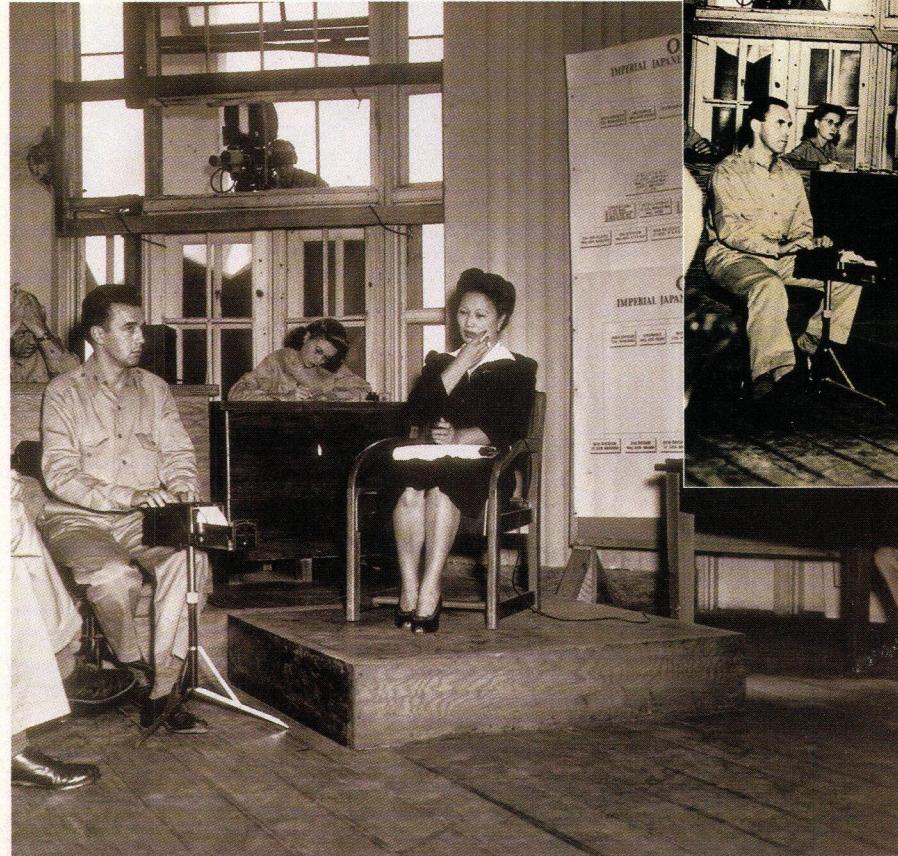
Yamashita had decided to abandon Manila without a fight. But seventeen thousand Japanese naval personnel elected to ignore Yamashita's decision. Instead they carried out orders from the Japanese Naval Ministry to destroy Manila's harbor facilities and fought to the death in a bloody house-to-house battle that ended in the city's devastation. They also committed widespread atrocities—rapes, murders, and summary executions against civilians in the city—that left thousands of Filipinos dead. Many other Filipinos, including 25,000 in Batangas province, had already been killed as part of the Japanese response to repeated guerrilla attacks emanating from communities hostile to Japanese occupation.

This series of events, added to the appalling treatment of prisoners and in-

ternees throughout the Japanese occupation, raised anti-Japanese feeling in the Philippines to an all-time high.

As the Allies recaptured more and more territory, the evidence from hundreds of Japanese prison camps throughout Asia painted an even worse picture than had been imagined. At the end of the war, images of gaunt figures with dead eyes emerging from behind barbed wire and stockades, unimaginable tales by survivors, and reports of discoveries of mass graves pushed the devastation of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Tokyo to the back pages and seemed to provide ample justification for any punishment meted out to people who could have caused or allowed this to happen. Someone had to pay.

War-crimes trials began within weeks of the cessation of hostilities and lasted nearly three years. Many military and government leaders were charged, including Tojo, one of the 29 "Class A" Japanese tried in Tokyo for crimes



AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

Convened in the elegant former High Commissioner's residence in Manila (far left), Homma's trial centered in large measure on the question of chain of command, as evidenced by the organization chart behind the witness stand. Among the many witnesses called by the prosecution were Buenaventura Bell (above, right)—a teacher from San Juan del Monte, who displayed American and Philippine flags taken forcefully from his office after the Japanese troops shot him for refusing to remove them himself—and the tearful Filipino women shown testifying (above).

against humanity by an international tribunal similar to the one convened in Nuremberg, Germany, to hear the charges against Nazi leaders. Almost all the Japanese defendants in the Tokyo trials were convicted; Tojo was hanged with six others in 1948.

The first "Class B" trials of Japanese officers started right away. The American and Filipino press reported with en-

thusiasm that immediately following the Japanese surrender, General Yamashita had been locked up as a war criminal in the Philippines and General Homma had been located in Japan, arrested, and sent to Manila. Neither Japanese general was charged with ordering, condoning, or specifically with knowing about the commission of atrocities. The prosecution's premise that they *should have known*, accepted by both trial commissions as grounds for culpability, provided one basis for appeal.

The Yamashita case reached the U.S. Supreme Court a month after his conviction. His lawyers asked the Court to consider that the interpretation of command responsibility employed in his indictment and trial was not only unprecedented in U.S. or international law, but was inconsistent with the standard employed in the just-beginning Nuremberg trials. The defense argued that the Japanese naval personnel, who undeniably committed atrocities in Manila, were acting against

Yamashita's orders and that the general himself, dug in many miles away without communication with Manila and fighting his losing battle with U.S. forces, had no way of controlling them.

The attorneys for the defense asked the Justices to examine the rules of evidence and the adverse conditions under which the accused was forced to operate. They argued that there was evidence to suggest that Yamashita's trial, conviction, and sentence to an ignominious death by hanging were staged by General MacArthur in order to deliver his own separate messages to the people of the Philippines and those of Japan.

By this time, the trial of General Homma was under way in Manila. Many of the issues of the Yamashita case resurfaced in the Homma trial, as did many of the sentiments with respect to the two Japanese generals. Homma, however, as commanding officer of an invading Japanese force, might have been accorded less benefit of the doubt in the court of



ROBERT L. PEI



AP/WIDEWORLD PHOTOS

public opinion than Yamashita, steward of an administration clearly falling apart as the defeat of Japan became imminent.

On December 19, Homma and his defense team appeared before a commission headed by General Donovan, who had served on the Yamashita trial commission. Joining him for the Homma proceedings were Brigadier General Arthur Trudeau, Brigadier General Warren McNaught, Brigadier General Robert Gard, and Major General Basilio Valdes, a former chief of staff to the Philippine Army whose brother was beheaded by the Japanese.

After the charges were read, General Homma rose and entered in English his plea of "not guilty." The trial was then set for January 3, 1946. Skeen, who had requested a month to prepare, wrote home that "the prosecution admitted that it would take longer than the two weeks they asked, but the commission

arbitrarily set the date for trial as Jan. 3. It is almost a physical impossibility to get the work done in that time."

Just the same, the defense team determined to do its best. Coder and Nataupsky went off to Tokyo to search for witnesses, while Pelz worked with Furness to draft a motion to dismiss. Writing in his diary on December 30, Pelz reflected that the "whole tradition of Anglo-American law is to get justice and a fair trial for the individual. Perhaps Homma did not know of and 'permit the atrocities.' That is what we are seeking to learn. Our professional pride could permit nothing other than what we are doing"

The first order of business—the motion to dismiss—stated that MacArthur's control of the proceedings was inappropriate because "no man should be placed in the position of being in essence accuser, prosecutor, defense counsel, judge, jury, court of review and

court of final appeal. He should particularly not be placed in this position where he is a military commander who was defeated by the accused in a campaign out of which the charges arose"

The motion caused a furor even before it was published in the newspapers. A superior officer, Pelz wrote, "reamed Skeen and me . . . [He] proceeded to tell us what the Army can do to us; how it never forgets and that it is the most powerful organization in the country."

The commission headed by General Donovan was also not about to let "defeated in battle" get into the final record. A New Year's conference resulted in a compromise, with the defense agreeing, according to Pelz, "to delete the words General MacArthur 'had been defeated by' General Homma to put that General MacArthur 'had unsuccessfully opposed General Homma.' For some reason that satisfied General Donovan and it didn't



COURTESY OF ROBERT L. PELZ

Homma sat transfixed at the defense table (far left) as a succession of witnesses told of the sufferings they endured at the hands of their Japanese captors. Among the few witnesses for the defense was Homma's wife, Fujiko—shown left with attorneys Captain George Furness, Captain George Ott, Lieutenant Robert Pelz, and Major John H. Skeen, Jr.—who testified (above) to his character and his removal from command in August 1942 for being too "soft" in his treatment of the Filipinos.

AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

make any difference to us."

The motion to dismiss did, of course, get into the papers. A short time later Skeen received a letter from retired Colonel William F. Beck of Phoenix, Arizona, that revealed how some Americans felt about what sort of justice Japanese deserved. "Your move for the dismissal of charges against this Japanese fiend" he wrote, ". . . looks like you were trying to make a cheap play to the galleries by tweaking the nose of the great MacArthur. It smacks of the speckle of the small cur-dog, which from behind the shelter of his master's legs barks defiance at a mastiff. . . . As an American you should be spit on and scorned by every good citizen. As a lawyer you should be looked upon by every respectable member of the bar as a disgrace to the legal profession; and barred from practice in American courts of law. . . ."

Pelz remembered that "Jack was not a tough guy . . . and I'm sure that was a

real blow to him to have a letter from a retired colonel denouncing him as a traitor. . . . [H]e was a straight, patriotic American who was proud to be fighting in his way for his country." The young men's families and friends, at least, understood what they were up against with the overwhelming task ahead of them.

On January 3, the Homma trial began in the elegant, if shell-pocked, former High Commissioner's residence that served as the courthouse. From the outset, it was clear that the case against the Japanese commander, at least in terms of sheer volume, was overwhelming.

The prosecution opened by calling members of Homma's 1942 staff to establish that reports had been made to headquarters to the effect that prisoners were dying at a high rate from lack of food and water, and due to insufficient medicine for dysentery, one of the chief

causes of prisoner deaths. One officer testified that Homma received regular reports of prison conditions and that during the march of American and Filipino prisoners of war from Bataan to San Fernando, Homma's headquarters had been only five hundred yards from the road. Questioned by commission member General Trudeau, the officer acknowledged that before the Philippines operation, Homma had issued written orders that prisoners were to be treated in accordance with international law.

Dozens of witnesses offered overwhelming testimony to the widespread violations that had occurred during and immediately after the Japanese invasion and taking of the Philippines. Much of this testimony was by affidavit, despite Pelz's argument, as reported in the *New York Times*, that "We are enraged at the thought that an American or an Allied prisoner was summarily dealt with by



Claiming only moral responsibility for the atrocities recounted during his trial, Homma nonetheless accepted the verdict of guilty and the death sentence handed down by the American tribunal. He expressed his gratitude to the lawyers appointed to defend him for doing their best, under difficult circumstances, to represent him.

our enemies . . . How can we in the next moment deny this accused the right to confront witnesses against him?"

MacArthur's rules of evidence for these trials allowed for anything "a reasonable man" might find "of probative value." Troubled by this, General Trudeau noted that "MacArthur's instructions . . . really said that circumstantial and hearsay evidence may be admitted if you run short of sound evidence." General Donovan ruled that the commission would decide on a case-by-case basis whether to receive affidavits

and depositions. In fact, several already had been accepted.

Dozens of American and Filipino soldiers who had been eyewitnesses to atrocities along the March route and in the prison camps did take the witness stand. The testimony of Sergeant James Baldassarre of Brooklyn, New York, could have carried practically the entire prosecution case. The *New York Times* described him as "a perfect prototype on the stand, of the hard-bitten, sardonic old Army regular."

Baldassarre, wrote the *Times* reporter, "told the gruesome story, now known well to every American, of the long ordeal in the sun, of starvation and thirst and of the callous shooting and bayoneting of his sick, exhausted and footsore comrades who fell behind. 'I saw hundreds killed,' the graying old soldier said grimly."

Under questioning from Lieutenant Abram Raff of the prosecution, Baldassarre declared that from the time he had

left Mariveles until he reached Balanga, a period of about two days, he did not receive any food or water from the Japanese. Recalling the execution of a Colonel McConnel, who was with him during part of the march, the sergeant stated that "On the left side of the road, before we got to Orani, Colonel McConnel went in the direction of a big house. I asked [him], 'Where are you going?' He said, 'I have to take the chance to go there. I can't make the hike any more.' I said, 'What is the reason?' He said, 'My feet hurt me.' I said, 'If you go there you will be shot to death.' He said 'I have to take that chance.' He was shot right in the back before he got to the house" by Japanese guards.

After recounting a similar shooting of a Lieutenant Hayes in Orani, Baldassarre "recalled the day he stood behind the barbed wire that enclosed a peat-hole at San Fernando . . . among his comrades who lay wracked by pains of dysentery,

the weakness and fevers of malaria and beriberi. Then he saw a bright car pass by, with a Japanese officer in the back seat. . . . He was stouter then, and he wore a uniform, but I remember him, and he is in this room,' said the old sergeant. 'It was Lieut. Gen. Masaharu Homma.'

Following his testimony, Jimmy Baldassarre stood outside the courthouse and told a *Time* magazine reporter and others that "They should hang the man. . . . They should never give him a trial. He never gave us no trial. They drilled people like flies. Send him over to me; I'll fix him up." In his story, the reporter wrote that Baldassarre then "put a cigar in his mouth, pushed his overseas cap back off his sunburned forehead, and walked out with the air of a man who has just paid off an old debt."

The next day, Major Eduardo Vargas testified to the massacre of more than three hundred Filipino officers as they were being marched across the Bataan

Peninsula. "About two kilometers from Pantingan River," he recalled, "we were stopped by a group of Japanese soldiers and all officers ordered to separate from the privates, [who were] ordered to pro-

appalling events in question not only ran counter to General Homma's orders and policies, but that he had no knowledge of them. Pelz wrote in his diary that Homma himself was deeply shaken by the testimony. "I saw [him] this evening" Pelz noted, "and he is becoming a broken man. . . . I truly believe he had no idea of the things that occurred." Homma had told Pelz about "how he took it upon

himself to fly to Nanking after the infamous 'rape' and berated the commander of forces there—a full general—"I told him how could you permit these things to happen under your command? and now I find this was happening under my command."

Homma's spirits were greatly improved by the arrival a few days later of his wife, Fujiko, from Tokyo. Although it was highly unusual in Japan for a wife to do so, she had agreed to appear at her husband's trial as a character witness.

continued on page 66

"LEAVING HIMSELF TO THE JUDGMENT of God and future historians, Homma expressed to his lawyers his heartfelt gratitude . . . for the impartial stand you have taken so bravely."

ceed on their way." Taken into the forest, the officers were asked their last wish; they requested and received cigarettes. Then, Vargas continued, "the Japanese started stabbing all the captives with bayonets. . . . [T]he fellow at my side fell on top of me, and the officer beside me was pushed forward [and] covered my legs. A couple of Japanese went around and saw that the officer on my legs was still alive and gave him four thrusts. I didn't move, and even tried not to breathe so they wouldn't notice that I was alive."

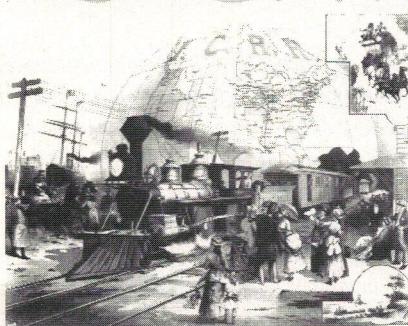
The defense could only argue that the

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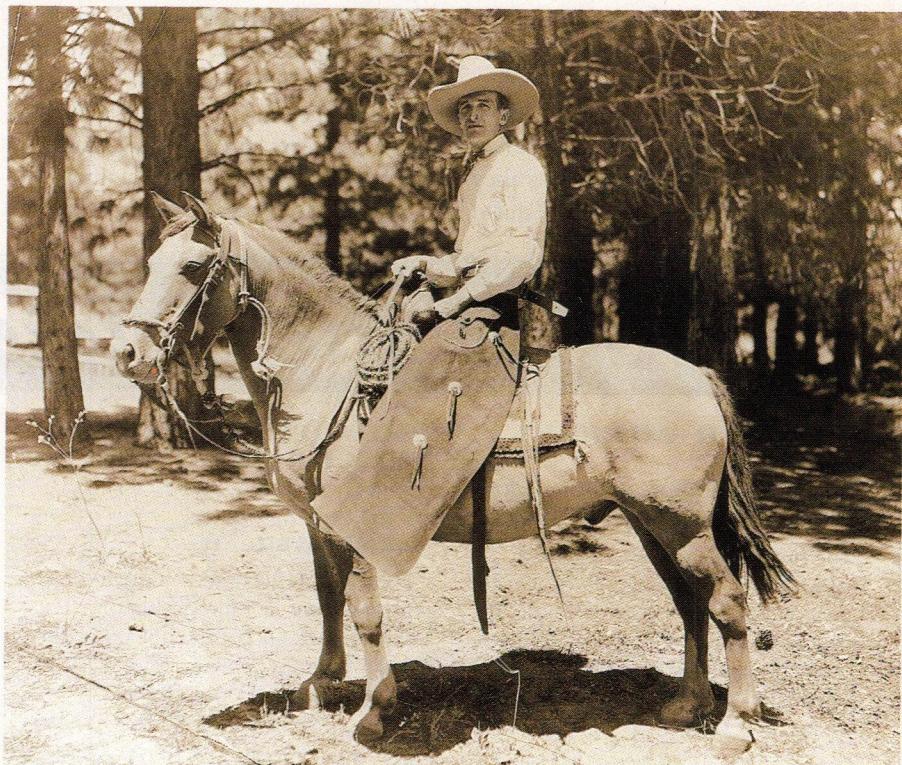
"MY INTEREST LAYS TOWARD THE HORSE"

BY WILLIAM GARDNER BELL CANADIAN-BORN AUTHOR, ARTIST, & HORSEMAN WILL JAMES CHANGED HIS NAME, HIS COUNTRY, & HIS LANGUAGE TO FOLLOW HIS DREAM OF BECOMING A GENUINE AMERICAN COWBOY.

ALTHOUGH WILL JAMES knew early on that he had a consuming weakness for horses, he was gilding the lily when he asserted that his life "from the time I first squinted at daylight has been with horses." In reality, his early squintings were those of a Canadian-born child named Joseph Ernest Nephtali Dufault, and his equine connections in boyhood were mostly limited to draft horses used on the farmland surrounding St. Nazaire d'Acton, the little village in southern Quebec where he was born on June 6, 1892.

Closer association with the horse would develop gradually during his boyhood, as he exercised a fertile imagination and a facile pencil on scraps of paper from a prone position on the kitchen floor. He would be in his teens and have changed his name, country, and language before he was fully able to indulge his penchant for horses.

Ernest acquired his early attraction to horses and cowboys when his sense of adventure was galvanized by pictures and stories of frontier life that enlivened the pages of books and periodicals in his growing-up years. The works of Frederick Remington and Charles Russell were as familiar to Canadians as to Americans, and frontier heroes were being eulogized in the dime novels of the day. Small wonder that young Ernest Dufault built a dream around the West, the cowboy, and the horse. Many youngsters of his and other generations did the same,



but what set Ernest apart was his determination to transform his dream from fantasy to reality.

In 1907, at the tender age of 15, Ernest left home and family to search for fulfillment in Canada's western provinces. It was a determined lad who boarded the train at Montreal, waved to his saddened but resigned parents, and proudly handed the conductor a one-way ticket to Regina, Saskatchewan.

Once there, Ernest survived the cul-

Born in Quebec in 1892, Will James (above) relinquished his French-Canadian identity at the age of 17 when he entered the United States under that name and set out to make his dream of being a cowboy come true. After working his way to top-hand status on the western range, he achieved remarkable success as an author and artist, illustrating his works with sketches and with oil paintings such as "A Cow Outfit of My Own" (right), which appeared in both Sun-Up: Tales of the Cow Camps and Cowboy in the Making.



ture shock inherent in the switch from French-speaking Quebec to English Saskatchewan. While he set about learning a new tongue, he scratched for odd jobs that would sustain him in his new environment.

After a halting start, Ernest edged his way into his first real contact with horses by doing menial chores on farms and ranches. His first big break came when he hired on with the 76 Cattle Company, an outfit that ran three thousand head in the southwestern corner of the province. It was a mark of his determination that, although still in his teens and completely lacking in experience, he presented himself to the 76 foreman, Fred Jackson, as a cowboy. Despite some reservations, Jackson offered the youth a job as horse wrangler, and Ernest jumped at the chance.

A picture taken of Ernest at this juncture in his life shows him in full cowboy regalia, with lasso in hand, six-gun at hip, and one arm resting across the saddle atop his dozing mount. But proud as he might have felt when the camera shutter clicked, the young man was no fool; he had tasted just enough of range life to know that it would take more than a few

months' time, some apparel, and good intentions to become a full-fledged working cowboy.

Despite its ups and downs, Ernest's interlude in western Canada fostered his self-reliance and gave him his grounding in English and cowboyng. But he still believed that a real cowboy could only be a native of the American West. So, sometime in 1910, Joseph Ernest Neph-tali Dufault shed his Canadian identity in Saskatchewan, slipped across a porous international border, and appeared in Montana under the name William Roderick James.

The American West was an easy place to get lost in, and newly named Will James began to drift through its vast reaches, trading upon his Canadian apprenticeship to land jobs on ranches in state after state. Eventually he became a top hand, particularly adept at breaking wild horses.

All these vagabond wanderings up and down the western ranges and the variety of ranch and roundup duties he performed laid the foundation for his later literary and artistic endeavors. James's footloose line riding and range-land chores inspired the words and sketches that would find their way

into magazine pieces a decade later and form the grist for his first two self-illustrated books: *Cowboys North and South* (1924) and *The Drifting Cowboy* (1925).

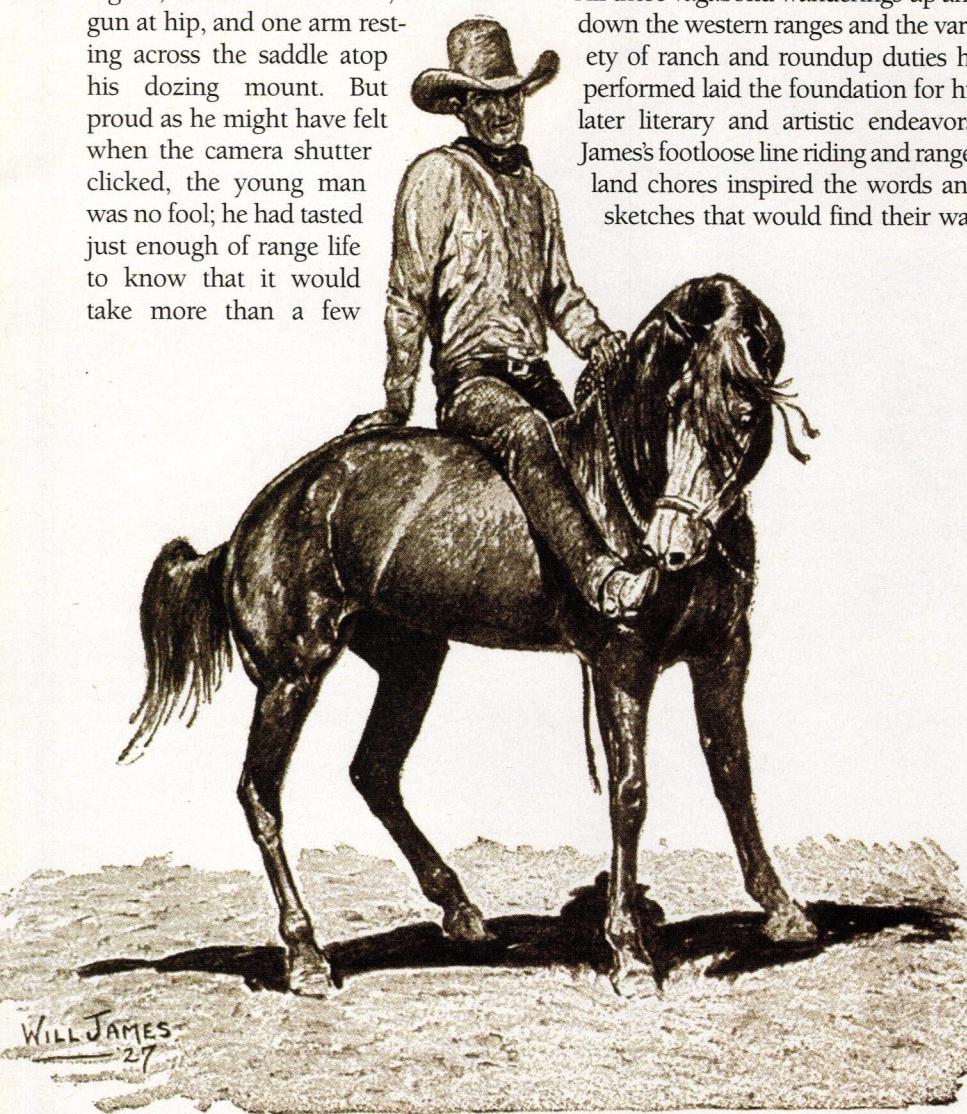
In 1911, "Bill," as the hands called him, joined a quartet of range riders in a mustanging venture in southern Idaho. The crew built a trap for their quarry and chased bands of wild mustangs at breakneck speed over tortuous terrain into their camouflaged corral.

That year and the next, they captured and broke hundreds of broomtails and trailed them northward to the lucrative stock market at Miles City, Montana. It was a fast-paced and dangerous game, and a significant learning experience for Will James, as he broadened his knowledge and understanding of horses and sharpened his skills as a horseman. Out of this experience would come his excellent novel, *The Three Mustangeers* (1933).

Two years after the mustanging venture, James got involved in a cattle-rustling scheme that threatened his free-ranging life in the saddle. He and a side-kick stole 31 head of strays on the Nevada range, drove them to a remote shipping site in neighboring Utah, and loaded them into stock cars for Denver. Although they almost pulled it off, James, who stayed behind to sell their horses and gear while his partner made the sale in Denver, was apprehended and jailed at Ely, Nevada. He was sentenced to a 12-to-18-month term in the Nevada State Prison at Carson City.

But James had a knack for working things out to his advantage. By using his sketching abilities and way with horses to impress prison officials, he wangled an assignment as caretaker of the little stable of horses maintained at the institution. He spent much of his time exercising his charges, and the experience later found its way, through word and sketch, into his rather capricious, yet very popular, memoir *Lone Cowboy: My Life Story* (1930).

Although he had tried to convince the parole board that he intended to turn over a new leaf as an artist, it took three tries before they granted his release in April 1916. Forced by his lack of money to take a humiliating—for a cowboy—job milking cows, he gladly jumped at a chance to sign on with the Rickey outfit of Bridgeport, California, breaking broncs at a line camp near Topaz Lake, south of Carson City, Nevada.



REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION OF THE WILL JAMES ART COMPANY, BILLINGS, MONTANA



James landed his first job as a ranch hand in Saskatchewan, Canada, and after heading south to the United States, was gradually able to pick up the skills of a cowboy (left) on a succession of ranches. Among the tasks he performed was the dangerous chore of breaking wild horses, which he depicted in "Rope Corral" from *Smoky, the Cowhorse*, winner of the 1927 Newbery Medal, awarded annually for the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children by the American Library Association.

The hazards of that occupation caught up with James when he ran into a wild and wily stud that fought him every step of the way. When he and another hand tried to put a hackamore on the bronc, it lashed out with a hind hoof, striking James on the left side of the jaw, knocking him out, and cracking and loosening some teeth.

After several days of excruciating pain, James quit his job, rode to the nearest railhead, sold his horse, sacked his saddle, and entrained for the West Coast, convinced that only there would he find the kind of professional help he

needed. At Los Angeles, a helpful cab driver took him to a qualified dentist on the Hollywood side of town, where James also found suitable lodging and a nearby restaurant to meet his needs. All he lacked was a source of income to cover his expenses.

"Things sometimes happen to break the rough lock on what's slow coming," James wrote in *Lone Cowboy*. "I was standing on a street corner looking at nothing in particular when I hear hoofs a pounding in a side street. I turned and I spots a half-dozen riders coming along. They looked like sure enough cowboys but I couldn't believe they was, not there amongst the brick buildings."

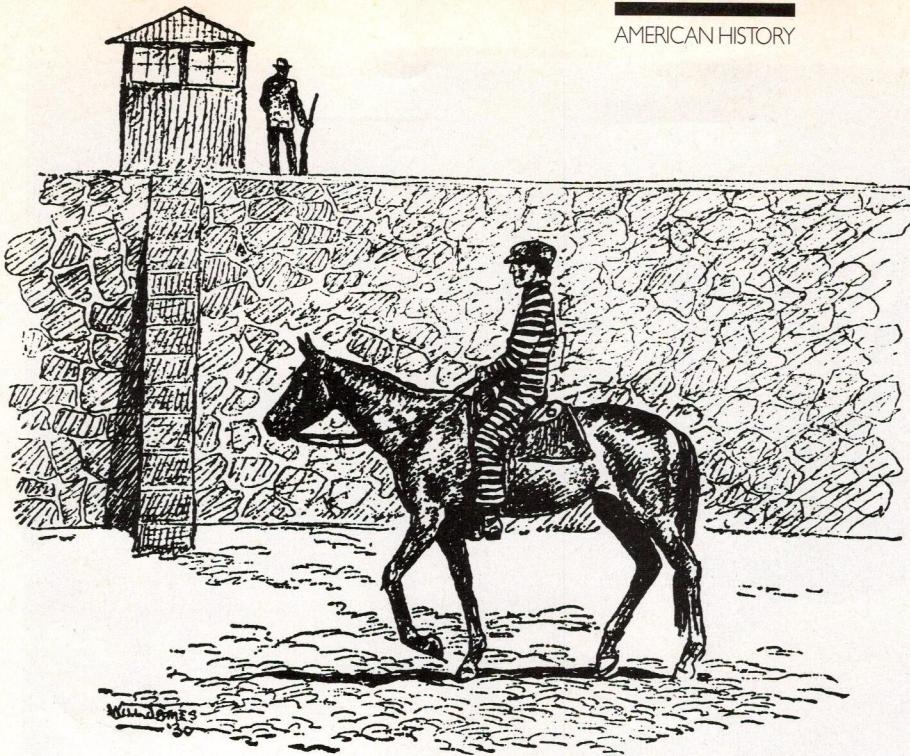
He gave the riders the once-over and spotted a face from the past, a cowboy named Sam Long from earlier range-riding days. Sam took James up behind him and transported him to a nearby movie lot, where the riders were working in Westerns. Before he knew it, James was hired by the Clarence Jones Stables and was back in the saddle again, riding hellbent down Main Street in many a fictional frontier town.

It was no powder-puff operation;

James pulled horses over backwards before a grinding camera, jumped them off precipices, and even doubled for leading men of similar stature. Among several hundred cowboys who worked for him over a long period of time, Jones remembered Will James for two reasons: his constant sketching and his downright laziness unless he was atop a horse.

Before long, James transferred to the Thomas Ince Studios, where assignments took him away from western roles to play a French officer in white uniform with gold braid or a knight in steel armor. One day, his fully accoutered horse became unnerved by the clanking of its own and its rider's protective gear and began acting up. The horse bucked its way into the middle of an elaborate Roman set, scattering armor, cast, and crew far and wide, and leaving James at center stage clad only in boots and underwear. As a result of this episode, James decided to answer the call of the open range. He wound up his affairs in the movie capital and boarded an eastbound train for the real West.

After leaving the train at Tonopah, Nevada, James bought a saddle and pack



REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION OF THE WILL JAMES ART COMPANY, BILLINGS, MONTANA

was inducted into the United States Army. The registration, which somewhat resembled his fictional account in *Lone Cowboy*, closed the door on his Canadian antecedence, at least as far as unwitting authorities and the general public were concerned.

James's luck was with him when he was posted to the 21st Infantry Regiment at Camp Kearny, California. Despite its being a foot-soldier unit, he got to be around horses when he was classified as a wagoner and assigned as a scout to ride point for the doughboys. Because of his cowboy background, he was given the additional duty of acting as orderly in charge of the officers' mounts.

His buddies kidded him about his role as scout, pointing out that they were the first to be shot. But James shrugged off the warnings: "I'd be a horseback, anyway, and not crawling along the ground like a terrapin." His complete absorption with horses almost got him into trouble one day, when he admired a big sorrel so intently that he failed to take note of the officer sitting on its back and neglected to render the customary salute.

Released from the military in the 1919 demobilization, citizen Will James returned to Nevada and the city of Reno just in time to catch on with the crew that was assembling the string for the First Annual Nevada Round-up, the "Carnival of the Range," which was due

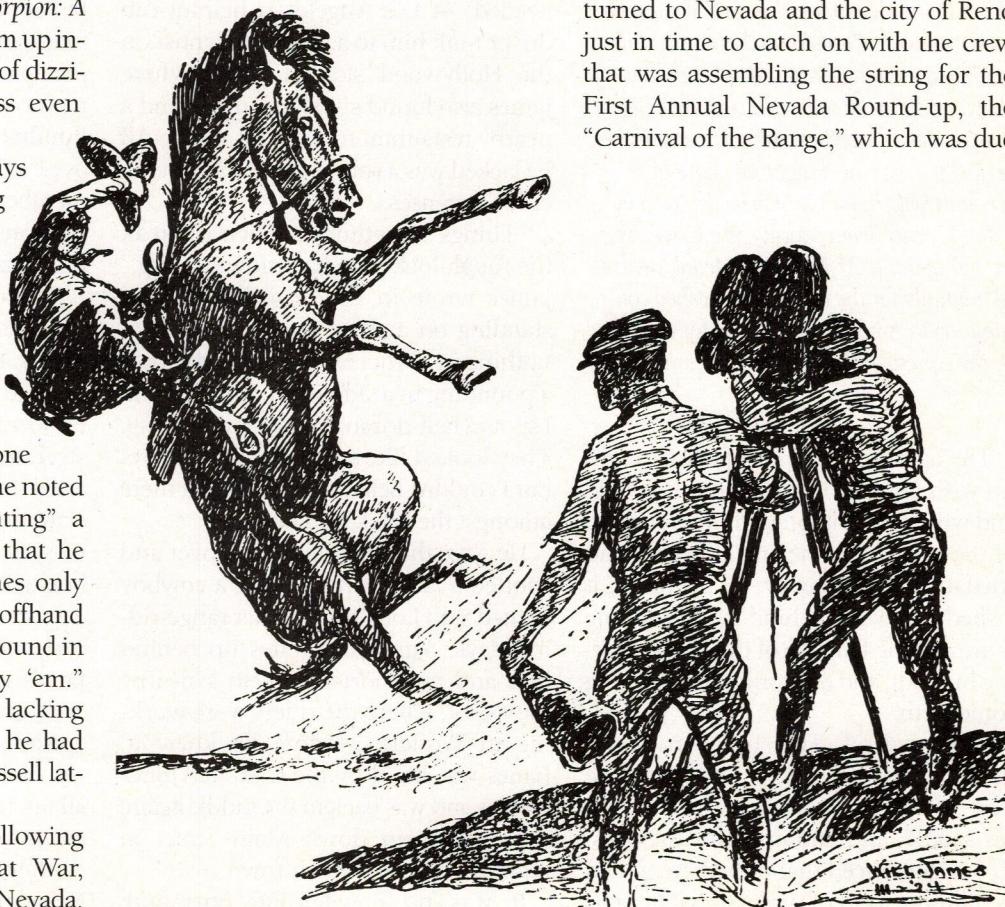
horse, then launched himself into a two-year, vagabond tour of the West. In the winter of 1917, he signed on with the Circle Dot Ranch in northeastern Montana to feed cattle—and break horses! It was there that a hammerheaded bronc—one strongly suggestive of the central character in his future book, *Scorpion: A Good Bad Horse* (1936)—tore him up internally, leaving him with spells of dizziness and feelings of grogginess even when on the gentlest of horses.

Afraid his bronc-busting days might be over and not knowing what he would do if they were, he turned his thoughts to art and to his idol, Charley Russell. With a sheaf of his best sketches, he lit out for Great Falls, Montana, to the west and knocked on Russell's door.

The visit was a disappointing one for Will James. Unfortunately, the noted artist was in his studio "fighting" a painting. So absorbed was he that he gave his visitor and the sketches only perfunctory attention and an offhand suggestion to "just scatter 'em around in saloons, somebody might buy 'em." James left in something of a huff, lacking the encouragement and praise he had sought. Nonetheless, he and Russell later became good friends.

In the spring of 1918, following America's entry into the Great War, James headed for Winnemucca, Nevada,

to check on his status with the draft board. He found that he had been called a full month before and was about to be sought as a draft dodger. Thus on May 20, 1918, William Roderick James, citing Billings, Montana, as his birthplace,



to open the first week of July. His sketching caught the attention of the show's managing director, winning for him, two years in a row, a commission to illustrate its posters and programs.

This was the first art he had ever sold, so the occasion held great significance for him. "It came to my mind again about being an artist," he said. Indeed,

An ill-conceived cattle-rustling scheme in 1915 landed James in prison. There, his winning personality and ability with a pencil caught the attention of prison authorities, who allowed him to work as caretaker to the institution's horses (left, top). Not long after his release, he headed for California and became a cowboy extra and stuntman in Hollywood Westerns (left, bottom). It did not take James long to become disillusioned with moviemaking, and he took an eastbound train to the "real West" and the work he loved. "Smoky and the Snubing Post" (below) is from Smoky.

his long participation in arena life—as bronc rider, roper, judge, announcer, artist, author, prominent personality—grew out of his cow-country background and reached the general public through such self-illustrated works as "Silver Mounted," a chapter in his first-rate book *Cow Country* (1927) and the interesting and more comprehensive arena volume, *Flint Spears: Cowboy Rodeo Contestant* (1938).

In Reno, James revived his friendship with a former range acquaintance, Fred Conradt, and became a regular visitor at the Conradt family home. Another cowboy, Elmer Freel, joined James and Fred, and the three became such inseparable companions that they dubbed themselves the "one-elevens." James reduced this to a numerical symbol—111—and made it a part of the signature on his art.

The footloose trio, ignoring a suggestion from Fred's father that the best way to make a living was to go out and get jobs,

hit upon the idea of using some bucking horses to stage impromptu bronc-riding exhibitions for spectator fees. But the enterprise was doomed when, in a practice session, a black horse named "Happy" bucked James off, causing him to hit his head on a railroad track. The unseated rider went to the hospital with a lacerated scalp and a severe concussion.

The incident proved to be doubly influential in James's life. Not only did it herald the end to his bronc-riding days, it also turned him irrevocably to art. He came out of the hospital to face the real world; simply put, he had lost his confidence in dealing with untamed horses. "I've been hurt and took thru some mighty tight places by many of 'em," he wrote, "I'd lost a considerable of my nerve, and now, instead of getting to be a better rider all the time, as most people would think, I'd passed the peak . . . and was going downhill . . . I'd had horses fall with me in every way, shape or form,



while running, stampeding, or bucking, at night or day, while the sun shined or while the stars was hid by dark clouds and lightning played, [and] in the thick of cloudbursts, hail and blizzards. I'd rode stapeders that swept me off in the thorny brush of the South, run off the side of tall Northern mountains, and bucked in places where a man couldn't walk. My breath has come short many a time. I'd been kicked and struck, rolled over the top of, and dragged"

Violent though they were, these experiences served James well when he wrote and illustrated *Sand* (1929), *Sun-Up: Tales of the Cow Camps* (1931), *All in the Day's Riding* (1933), *Home Ranch* (1935), *The Dark Horse* (1939), and *Horses I've Known* (1940). And they provided fabric for such juvenile works as *My First Horse* (1940), and his *Uncle Bill* trilogy (1932, 1935, 1938).

If he were now denied the direct personal participation in range life that sent Ernest Dufault west, James could nevertheless experience it vicariously through word and sketch—and ride gentle ponies in the bargain! He found a soul-mate in Fred Conradt's younger sister, Alice, who encouraged him to take up art as his central occupation. The couple married in 1920, just as he set out to redirect his life.

James studied briefly at the California School of Fine Arts in San Francisco, and even more briefly at Yale University's School of Fine Arts in New

Haven, Connecticut. He dropped out in both instances because he felt that formal instruction would ruin his free style. He sold some drawings to *Sunset* magazine, which was sufficient inspiration to harden his resolve.

He knew that he must break into the Eastern market if he were to establish himself in the new life. Suddenly, he had a shot at the "big time," when he sold an article, with sketches, to *Scribner's Magazine* on the subject of bucking horses and their riders. The public responded enthusiastically, *Scribner's* asked for more, and the demand spread to other national publications.

The income generated by this flurry of activity made it possible for the Jameses to buy a little five-acre spread on the Sierra slopes overlooking Nevada's Washoe Valley. There, under the sensitive editorial guidance of Maxwell Perkins of the Charles Scribner's Sons publishing firm, James went into authorial seclusion to

fashion an illustrated rangeland story about a favorite horse of his cowboy days.

Smoky, the Cowhorse (1926) premiered in a four-installment series in *Scribner's Magazine*, then came out in book form to wide critical acclaim. It won the Newbery Medal as 1927's most distinguished contribution to American literature for children. But it was not a juvenile book in the traditional sense. *Smoky* captivated readers of all ages and several generations, not only at home but around the world. A deluxe edition in 1929 featured James's first oil paintings and was reissued by *Scribner's* as recently as 1962.

James's precipitous rise to fame as an author and artist did not cause him to lose his weakness for horses. He kept seven at his little Washoe Valley property on the first rise of the Sierras, and later, when he acquired his dream spread, the notable "Rocking R" ranch in the Pryor



REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION OF THE WILL JAMES ART COMPANY, BILLINGS, MONTANA



James called upon all his experiences as a cowboy—including his days mustanging in Montana (left)—to illustrate his books. In the 1931 photograph below, he is seen working on the artwork for Big Enough. “The Horse Thief” (above) was painted for Smoky.

Mountains near Billings, Montana, he always had more horses around than he needed. He visited the barn regularly to commune with his Percheron team and bemoan the passing of the real West.

Tragically, during this time, James was also under the ruinous influence of drink, an addiction that caused him to lose his wife to a permanent separation. Finally, he lost the Rocking R as well.

James accepted an invitation to stay at the Palm Springs, California, ranch of Hollywood producer Dick Dickson while writing what would be his capstone volume, *The American Cowboy* (1942). He held vainly to the hope that one of the motion picture studios would

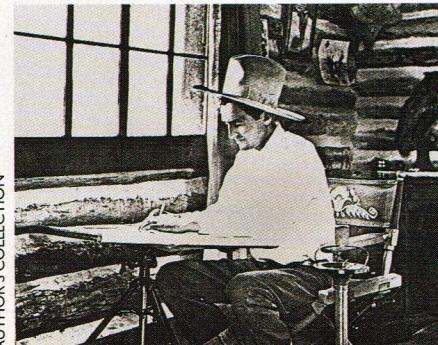
buy the movie rights to this work as they had to *Smoky* and *Lone Cowboy*. His hopes, however, were not to be realized.

Broken in health and sorely depressed, Will James died at Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital on September 3, 1942, a victim, at age 50, of his long struggle with alcohol. At a funeral service at Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Hollywood, the King's Men, a popular choral group of the day, sang “Home on the Range.” On September 8, 1942, James's remains were carried aloft to fulfill his last wish—that

he be cremated and his ashes scattered to the winds over his former Billings home.

As 150 friends and admirers, many of them members of the Billings Saddle Club, stood silently below, James's mortal remains were dispersed from a plane above Smoky Lane Ranch. In his eulogy, the Reverend Forrest W. Werts declared that “There are souls, like stars, that dwell apart. Of such is Will James. His soul has gone to roam the range of the eternal while his art lingers to lead those who love the West toward forgetfulness. That which he created knows no death.”

As the service ended the mourners drifted slowly away, absorbed in melancholy words and thoughts. Quiet descended upon Smoky Lane, as James's last remaining saddle horses, Pecos and Cortez, grazed contentedly nearby, oblivious to the meaning of it all. ★



AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

William Gardner Bell is the author of *Will James: The Life and Works of a Lone Cowboy* (Northland Press, 1987).

In 1921, the author joined thousands of other boys nationwide who had joined the Curtis League of Salesmen to sell copies of the Saturday Evening Post for Curtis Publishing. Each week, he ventured to May's Drug Store in his hometown of Charles City, Iowa (shown here in a 1920s' photograph) to collect his magazines and make the rounds of local homes and businesses.



TRAINING SCHOOL FOR BOYS

BY EARL CLARK CURTIS PUBLISHING DEVELOPED A MARKETING SCHEME AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY THAT INCREASED MAGAZINE SALES AND TAUGHT BUSINESS SKILLS TO YOUNG BOYS.

BACK IN THE "roaring '20s," the Curtis Publishing Company's *Saturday Evening Post* was uncontestedly America's foremost magazine, with the most popular authors and illustrators, the most advertising, and the biggest circulation. But it had something else that helped it achieve that multi-million circulation; since 1899, it had employed one of the shrewdest merchandising strategies in the history of magazine publishing.

Called the League of Curtis Salesmen, it had recruited, by the time the *Post* put an end to its operation in the 1940s, up to a quarter million boys, many of whom would go on to become successful retailers, chief executive officers, educators, administrators, or professionals. And most of them could credit much of their success to the training they received from this remarkable organization.

What the wizards of the Curtis company conceived was a masterful combination of appeals to a boy's sense of acquisitiveness and his desire for prestige. The former offered prizes calculated to appeal to every boy. As for prestige, what other youngsters were provided with their own printed letterhead, envelopes, and even business cards!

Entry into the League required no initi-



ation fee or references. Periodically, the *Post* ran advertisements heralding the accomplishments of its youthful salesmen and inviting newcomers to join the ranks. It was in response to such an ad that this author found himself at May's Drug Store in the dusty little town of Charles City, Iowa, on a December Thursday in 1921, hesitantly accepting delivery of ten copies of the *Saturday Evening Post* to dispose of at a nickel per sale.

It did not take long for me to learn that there was a lot more to gain than the one and a half cents that I got to keep out of each nickel, and what happened to me from then on is a microcosm of how the League worked. For every five *Posts* I sold, it seemed, I would receive one green voucher, five of which could be redeemed for one brown voucher. These handsomely printed "Brownies" could be accumulated in sufficient amounts to bring me an Auto Wheel coaster wagon, a Hohner harmonica complete with trumpets, a Columbia bicycle (one-speed in those days, of course), and innumerable other goodies displayed in the *Curtis Book of Prizes*.

The League also had a semi-evangelical quality that might strike today's worldly youths as ridiculously corny, but it was a perfect fit for the conventions of the Coolidge era and a business-oriented publication like the *Post*. Its philosophy reflected the tenets of Cyrus H. K. Curtis, a one-time newsboy who, in true Horatio Alger style, went on to found his publishing company in Philadelphia in 1891. The theory was that lads selling Curtis publications not only would earn commissions and prizes, but would also learn how to meet strangers, sell a product on its merits, and keep accurate business records—all the while progressing through the ranks, much like Boy Scouts going from Tenderfoot to Eagle.

The *Book of Prizes*, revised each spring

and fall, displayed more than two hundred alluring treasures for which the Brownies could be exchanged. Manufacturers' representatives beat a path to the Curtis door to get a piece of the action. The company became the largest purchaser of Louisville Slugger baseball bats, as well as Spaulding baseballs and gloves.

The emphasis on brand names of top quality is evidenced by an incident related to me by Ford Robinson, a retired Curtis senior vice president who in the 1920s was the company's prize manager. His story involved George Horace Lorimer, who held the *Post*'s editorial reins from 1899 to 1937.

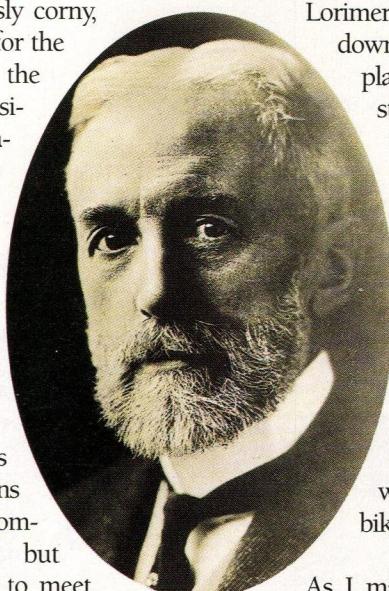
It seems that when the father of a Curtis salesman discovered that the headlight of the bicycle his son ordered from the *Prize Book* was powered by a Japanese-made bulb, he fired off an indignant letter, not to the prize manager, but to George Lorimer himself. "I was called down to Lorimer's office to explain," Robinson told me, still quaking at the memory. "It was the only time I ever talked to the great man on official business, for George Horace Lorimer talked only to God. I felt lucky not to be fired! At any rate, our bicycle vendors became acutely aware that if this ever happened again, they would never sell another bike to Curtis."

As I made my weekly calls at May's Drug Store, I began to learn more about this new League that I, along with some 30,000 other boys, had joined. If I continued to build up my magazine route, for example, I would be promoted from the entry-level "junior" rank to that



of Senior Salesman. Another step up the ladder was the Expert Degree, and at the pinnacle was the accolade of Master Salesman, given to those who, among other things, sold one hundred or more *Posts* per week. (The other considerations included proof of keeping up acceptable grades in school and putting aside some earnings into a savings account.) A Master Salesman, I further learned, was not only eligible for a loan of up to \$5,000 from Curtis Publishing to finance a college education, but also would be guaranteed a job after graduation!

The company provided training for its young salesmen in the form of a little magazine called *Our Boys*, with a world of helpful tips on how to win Brownies and influence people. We learned, for example, never to approach a prospect with an apologetic "You don't wanna buy a *Saturday Evening Post* today, do ya?" Instead, *Our Boys* advised me to scan the *Post* as soon as it arrived. Then, as I went from door to door, I should introduce myself politely, greet the perspective buyer by name if I had observed it on the mailbox or learned it from a



BROWN BROTHERS

Cyrus H. K. Curtis (1850-1933) (left), a former newsboy who founded his publishing company in 1891, provided the guiding philosophy for the League. Boys may have been drawn to the League by the prospect of earning "cash profits" and merchandise, such as the Spaulding baseball glove and the "Louisville Slugger" bat shown above, but they also learned valuable business and management skills.

neighbor, quickly flip open the magazine, and begin.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Pendergast," I would say, "I think you'd be interested in this week's *Saturday Evening Post*. Now here's the first chapter of a new serial by Harry Leon Wilson titled 'Merton of the Movies' that tells a lot about what goes on in Hollywood, and it's real funny, too. And

I see you have a beautiful dog, so you'll want to read Albert Payson Terhune's new story about *Lad*. And if you want to find out what's going on in Europe since the war, here's an article by Isaac F. Marcosson"

There was only one way to shut up such a gabby kid, and that was to fork over a nickel. Or, of course, slam the door in his face. A good share of the time, I got the nickel, and the chances were that when I went back the next week, I would not have to repeat the sales talk.

The *Saturday Evening Post*—with its diatribes against foreigners who wanted to immigrate here or borrow money from our government, its staunch support of Prohibition, and its stock of the nation's favorite fiction writers—was finely tuned to the middle-class values of the young

twentieth century. I found that once someone got hooked on reading the *Post*, they were apt to stay hooked. And so my list of regular customers mounted steadily week by week.

Within a year, the watch fob attached to my shiny new Ingersoll, for which I



Ads, such as the one above in which the author was himself featured, offered youngsters the opportunity to have "a business of my own," complete with "business cards and stationery"

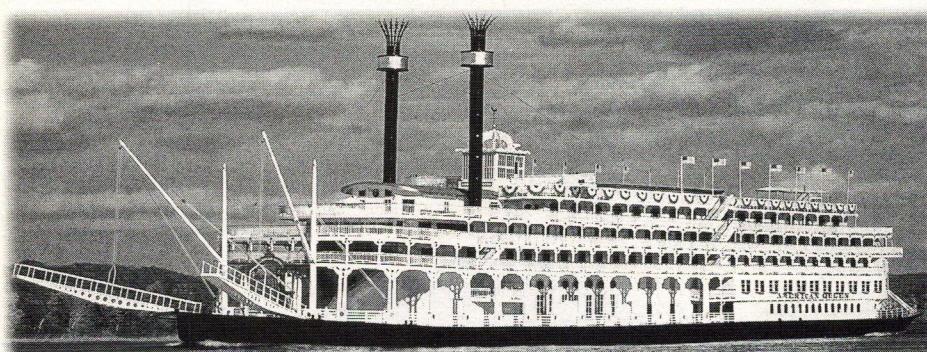
had exchanged a stack of Brownies, designated me the holder of the Expert Degree. And I had become sufficiently affluent that, after settling my accounts each Saturday afternoon, I could still squander fifteen cents to see Tom Mix or William S. Hart in an "oater" at the local movie palace. And even indulge a like amount to dawdle over one of Mr. May's delectable ice-cream sodas.

All this prosperity came tumbling down around my ears one day when my father announced that we would be moving to Columbus, Ohio, where he would be taking on a new job. I was appalled. What about my job? Tearfully, I wrote to Ralph B. Miller in Philadelphia, official secretary of the League of Curtis Salesmen, whom I had come to regard as a sort of distant scoutmaster, telling him I would have to relinquish my cherished League membership. Typical of the personal touch that the huge publishing house maintained with its youthful salesmen, Miller wrote back that the League had faith in me, that he had watched with great interest my progress in Charles City, and in fact he was so positive I would es-

continued on page 64

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THE GREAT FAMINE

"A MIST ROSE UP OUT OF THE SEA," a farmer said of the strange scene about him, ". . . then when the fog lifted, you could begin to see the potato stalks lying over as if the life was gone out of them. And that was the beginning of the great trouble and the famine that destroyed Ireland."

Something wicked had come Ireland's way in the somber summer of 1845, and the people of the land felt the touch of terror. While traveling from Dublin to Cork, Father Mathew, a well-known temperance apostle, beheld "the wide waste of putrefying vegetation. . . . In many places the wretched people were seated on the fences of their decaying gardens, wringing their hands and wailing bitterly the disaster that had left them foodless."

With terrifying suddenness, the countryside took on the countenance of annihilation. In field after field, Ireland's life-giving potatoes lay blackened, withered, and blasted. "The potatoes had been blighted, turned black and brown," Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa recounted. "The air was laden with a sickly odor of decay. The hand of Death had stricken the potato fields."

Even after 150 years, accounts of the Irish sufferings strike deep at the heart: Mary St. Leger, sixty and blind, "died from want and hunger" . . . Mark Clancy, "died of starvation" . . . Mary Wright, dead from a fit "brought on by want of

food" . . . 14-year-old James Foley "dead of cold on the road" . . . the widow Catherine McEvoy "died screaming in her hut" . . . Such was their losing struggle to get from one day to the next.

During its years of wrath, from 1845 to 1850, this scourge upon the land would prove to be the most stunning blow the Irish people ever received.

More than a million of its estimated eight million men, women, and children perished—either from starvation or disease. As many as two million survivors fled the famine—and their native land—in sailing vessels weighted with human cargo. About 1.5 million Irish journeyed to America; others went to Canada, Australia, and England.

In his "The Bay and Harbor of New York" (right), Samuel Waugh depicts the arrival of a shipload of Irish immigrants in New York City in 1847. During the years 1845-50, 1.5 million men, women, and children left Ireland for America; a like number never had that option, having succumbed to starvation or disease as a result of the blight that infested the staple crop of the Irish diet.

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK



BY EDWARD OXFORD WHEN A BLIGHT STRUCK THE IRISH POTATO CROP IN THE 1840S, IT PRECIPITATED A FAMINE THAT CAUSED MORE THAN A MILLION DEATHS AND THE EXODUS OF THAT MANY MORE TO AMERICA.

The fungus was said to have reached Europe with a shipment of apparently healthy seed potatoes from America. The blight first took hold in Belgium, then spread to the Netherlands and France before crossing the Channel to England and, fatefully, Ireland.

The effects of the blight were first seen in Ireland in August 1845, and by No-

vember it was estimated that half the crop had been destroyed. Because the fungus reproduced in warm conditions, its effect was less noticeable during the winter months that followed. A heat wave the following summer, however, provided ideal conditions for the revival of the blight, and by late 1846, the potato crop was practically destroyed. It

would be years before the cause of the blight was identified as an invisible fungus, *phytophthora infestans*, whose spores were carried on the wind.

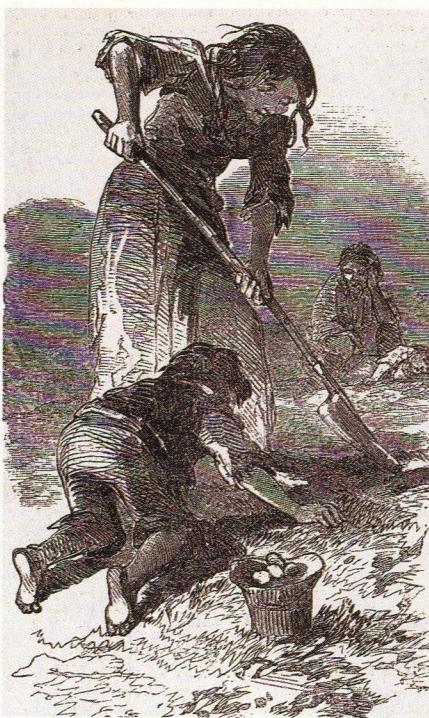
The potato represented life to the poor of Ireland, who ate up to 12 pounds of potatoes each day. The nutrient-rich tuber was brought to Europe from the New World by the Spaniards in the late 1500s,



and by the eighteenth century it had become Ireland's staple foodstuff, more commonly eaten than bread.

Although staggering in its sameness, the diet seems to have provided all that was needed for a healthy life. Travelers to Ireland noted the wholesome appearance of its people. They may have been regarded as the most wretched people in Europe, but the Irish were well nourished and physically robust.

Largely because of its importance within Ireland, the potato served as a convenient symbol of cultural disengagement. The British, who had for centuries held sway over Ireland, looked down upon the Irish potato as a "lazy root," grown in "lazy beds" by a "lazy people." But British antipathy toward the Irish went far beyond the inglorious "spud." The Anglo-Saxon held the Celt



CULVER PICTURES

The misery of Ireland's poor as they struggled to survive the ravages of hunger during the famine is evident in images depicting a mother and child searching a stubble field for potatoes unspoiled by the blight (above) and peasants harvesting the potato crop left behind by an evicted tenant near Tralee, County Kerry (right). The child shown in the drawing at the top of the page stands before a "scalp," a hole dug in the earth and covered with sticks and pieces of sod that served as home to peasants evicted from their homes in Clare and Connemara during the famine.



in disdain because he was of a separate race; and the Protestant disparaged the Catholic because he was of a different faith. Such feelings had, of course, long since become mutual.

Ireland's lot since its subjugation by England in the twelfth century had been one of woe. As early as 1729, Jonathan Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, wrote a scalding satire—*A Modest Proposal*—in which he bitterly proposed that the Irish be taught to eat their own children as a solution to the ever-present food shortage. The African-American abolitionist Frederick Douglass—himself a former slave—wrote in 1845 that "of all places to witness human misery, ignorance, degradation, filth and wretchedness, an Irish hut is preeminent . . . the people [of Ireland] are in the same degradation as the American slaves."

Although there had been crop failures from time to time, the potato had never before truly failed the Irish poor. The less fortunate members of society could count on the potato as their staff of life. During the first half of the nineteenth century, however, an apocalyptic convergence of natural catastrophe, a slumping economy, and human enmities resulted in the Great Famine that laid siege to Ireland and whose horrors, declared one chronicler, "surpassed any-

thing in the dismal chant of Dante."

Whole villages deserted, the dispossessed stalked about the countryside "scattering disease, destitution, and dismay in all directions." They would burrow among broken walls, or ditches, or bogs. The "haggard, sallow and emaciated figures, stricken down by fever," lay prostrate upon the streets.

The English Quaker James Hack Tuke called the scenes he witnessed in Ireland "the culminating point of man's degradation." A magistrate told of a dwelling-place in which "frozen corpses were found upon the mud floor, half devoured by rats," while a parish priest spoke of "a girl lying dead, with two others beside her just expiring. A famished cat got upon the bed and tried to gnaw the dead girl, but I struck it aside." Said a saddened physician, taking up a skeleton child in a cottage: "Here is the way it is with them all; their legs swing and rock like the legs of a doll."

"There is nothing for us to do," a forlorn woman told a passerby, "but to lie down and die." Which, with silent resignation, is what so very many did. Lying huddled in the darkened corners of their cottages, they waited for the end to come.

Landlords matter-of-factly drove the wretchedly poor, who were unable to pay their rent, out of their hovels. To be



BROWN BROTHERS

surely rid of the starving tenants, landowners tore down the ramshackle cottages and cabins that had sheltered them. An observer described one such eviction: "At a signal, the sheriff and the ruffian crowbar-brigade dragged the in-

mates of the cabin out upon the road. The thatched roof was ripped down and the earthen walls battered in by crowbars; the screaming mother, the half-naked children, the father and sons, the tottering elders were hauled out. So the villains plied their horrible trade." Local police saw to it that the peasants complied with the bidding of the landlords, one of whom stated that "The exuberance of the tree of Irish population must be cut off by extermination or death."

The numbers who died of fever far exceeded those who died of hunger. People became so fearful of contagion that they hesitated to bury the dead. At times, cabins were simply pulled down and the debris strewn over the corpses within them. When burial did take place, it was usually in unmarked graves on hillsides, in fields, or alongside roads.

Coffins with hinged-bottoms, which could be used over and over again, were put to widespread use by the destitute. The corpses, sometimes wrapped in sacks or straw mats, were carried to the grave-site for burial, whereupon the bottom of the coffin swung open, depositing the body in the earth.

At first, British efforts to relieve the Irish misery were vigorous, but they fal-

tered as the famine persisted. Britain's Prime Minister at the outbreak of the famine, the Conservative leader Sir Robert Peel, took steps to alleviate the situation by purchasing Indian corn from the United States and having it shipped to Ireland for food.

But in 1846, the Whig party took over leadership of the government and was not so sympathetic to the plight of the Irish. Throughout the remainder of the famine years, British decision makers pursued that nation's traditional policy of *laissez faire*—a philosophy of non-interference by government in economic matters—which encouraged people to follow their own ideas free from government's meddling.

Ireland, they felt, should be left to "the operation of natural causes." And in fact, some of the populace did make economic headway under this system. But social philosophers turned a blind eye to the plight of Ireland's poor, who possessed ever-fewer resources with which to help themselves.

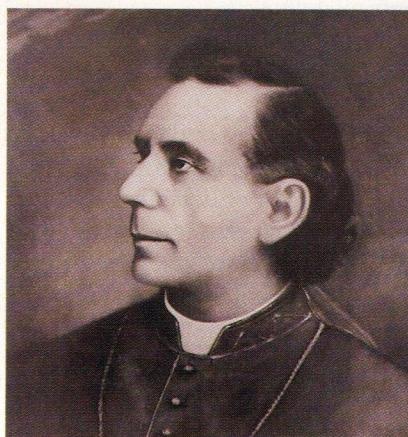
The government did set up hundreds of workhouses, not as much to save the Irish, as to keep them from fleeing to England. Thousands of Irish flocked to work-relief projects that paid them a pit-



More than one million Irish emigrated to America during the famine years for reasons that extended beyond the fear of hunger to the desire to escape the injustices and political persecution of life in their homeland. Their skills, hard work, and determination helped build cities, railroads, and road networks that laid the groundwork for much of the prosperity the United States later enjoyed. While the stories of most immigrants faded into obscurity, a few—such as the six featured here—achieved great personal success and a permanent place in American history.



CULVER PICTURES, INC.



ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO ARCHIVES & RECORD CENTER

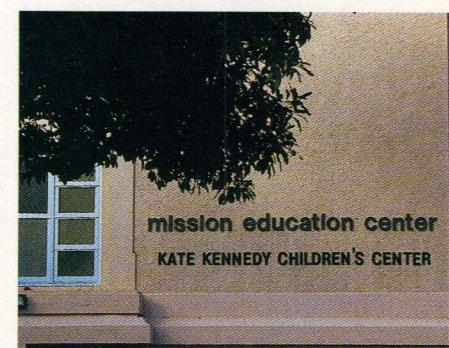
PATRICK AUGUSTINE FEEHAN (1829-1902)

The first Catholic archbishop of Chicago was born in Killenaule, County Tipperary. While he was in training for the priesthood, his parents left famine-plagued Ireland for America. The young seminarian eagerly seized an opportunity to join them there and complete preparation for his 1852 ordination. As a curate in three St. Louis churches during the next few years, Father Feehan earned the title "priest of the poor" for his good works among those in need. During the Civil War, he tirelessly sought to comfort the wounded of all religions, and as Bishop of Nashville, Tennessee, in the post-war years, he reconstructed the war-torn diocese by rebuilding churches and establishing schools, a convent, and an orphanage for the children of soldiers who had died in the war. In 1880, Feehan was elevated to archbishop of the newly created Chicago archdiocese, which thrived during his 22-year administration.



MICHAEL CUDAHY (1841-1910)

Michael and his parents left Callan, County Kilkenny in 1849. At the age of 14, he became employed at a meatpacking company in Milwaukee. During the next 25 years, he advanced rapidly within the business. His ability was rewarded in 1875 when he accepted a partnership in Armour & Company of Chicago. Cudahy's development of the summer curing of meats under refrigeration, which made fresh meat available throughout the year, was his singular contribution to the industry. He also was involved with the evolution of the refrigerator car that allowed perishable foods to be transported without spoiling. With his brother Edward, he formed the Cudahy Packing Company in 1890, continuing as its president until his death.



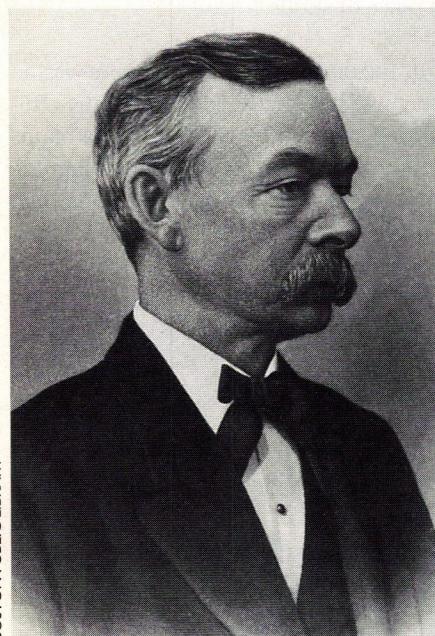
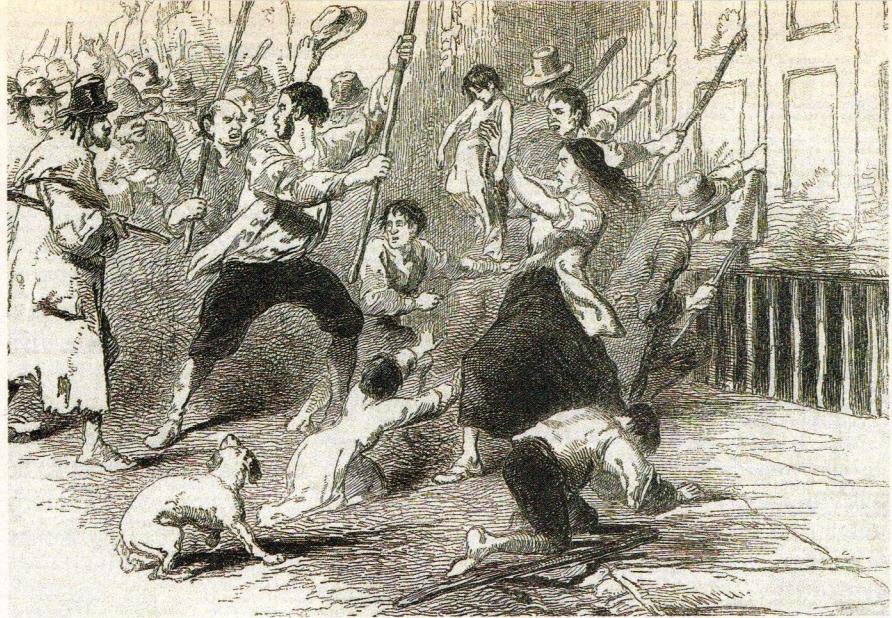
KATE KENNEDY (1827-1890)

Kate and her family were driven from their home in Gaskinstown, County Meath, in 1849 by the potato famine. Settling in New York City, she spent her spare time in preparation for a career in education. In 1856, she moved to San Francisco, where she became a teacher, well-known for her inspirational work. A fervent feminist who worked tirelessly for the woman suffrage and labor causes, Kennedy successfully campaigned for passage of a bill guaranteeing "equal pay for equal work" for teachers. In 1911, her memory was honored with the founding of the Kate Kennedy Schoolwomen's Club of San Francisco; a public school in that city also bears her name.

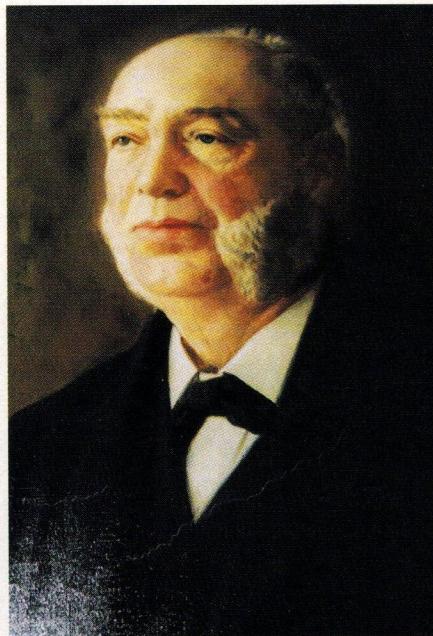
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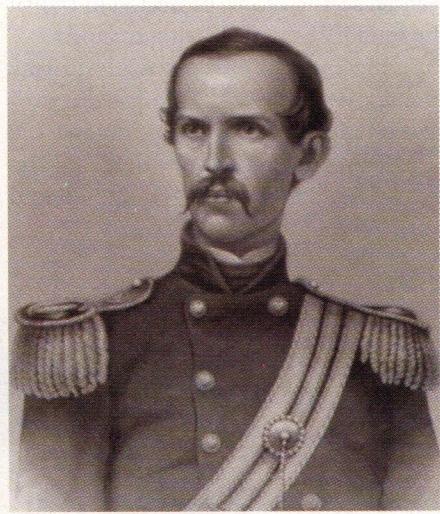
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**MICHAEL CORCORAN
(1827-1863)**

Corcoran, the son of a British army officer, was born in Carrowkeel, County Donegal, and at the age of 18 became a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary. In 1849, he resigned his commission in protest over the oppressive manner in which the police force treated the Irish people. He emigrated to the U.S., where he worked for the city of New York and served in the 69th New York Militia, rising by 1859 to the rank of colonel. Court-martialed for refusing to parade his regiment before the visiting Prince of Wales, he was released without a trial at the start of the Civil War to command his "Fighting 69th" for the Union army. Captured at the Battle of Bull Run, he was held prisoner for a year and threatened with execution. Upon his release, he was commissioned a brigadier general and raised the Corcoran Legion, composed mainly of Irish immigrants. He died in a riding accident in Virginia.

PATRICK ANDREW COLLINS (1844-1905)

Born at Ballinafauna, County Cork, Collins and his family sailed to Boston in 1848, after his father's death. A laborer active in union matters in his younger years, Collins's ability as a public speaker led him into Democratic Party politics in 1867. He graduated from Harvard Law School in 1871 and successfully ran for Congress in 1882, serving three terms. Rewarded with a consulship in London for his party loyalty and support of President Grover Cleveland, Collins returned to the U.S. with a keen interest in Boston politics. In 1901, he was elected mayor of that city, where his fair-mindedness gained him much support.

MICHAEL MORAN (1833-1906)

A native of Killara, Westmeath, Michael emigrated with his family in 1850, settling in Frankfort, New York. At the age of 17, Moran worked on the Erie Canal, driving mules that pulled the cargo barges. In 1860, he moved to New York City, where he purchased a one-half interest in a tugboat. Eventually, he owned a fleet of tugs and operated the leading towing company in the port of New York. Moran's legacy continues today; the company he began remains one of the largest tugboat businesses in the United States.

tance for doing such things as breaking stones for ten hours a day. More than 500,000 toiled at building roads, many of which, like the make-work schemes themselves, went nowhere in particular.

And Britain put its needs first. Rather than use Ireland's crops of oats, rye, wheat, and barley to feed the starving people there, the government saw to it that those grains continued to reach British markets unabated during the famine years. The Irish peasants sold their home-grown products even though their own families were hungry; the money earned from the sale of grain did pay the rent, thus keeping them from being evicted. Even so, many resented seeing crops, protected in transit by military escorts, leaving Ireland.

Some English citizens made private donations to the Irish poor, as did various charitable groups, most notably the Quakers—the Society of Friends—who set up relief committees in Dublin and

in London and established soup kitchens in Ireland. The government also set up soup kitchens that served "stirabout"—a thin oatmeal-based soup—to as many as three million people a day during the worst of the famine.

In the main, however, the British government let God and the starving Irish work things out between themselves. To some British authorities, Ireland seemed cursed; her misfortunes were too frequent, too hopeless, and too vast to be solved by even the most magnanimous of human means. Others blamed the Irish themselves for many of their own troubles.

Some within the government at Westminster subscribed to the view that the famine confirmed that there was a natural superiority in the grand scheme of things, of rich over poor, of Anglo-Saxon over Celt, and of Protestant over Catholic. The Irish were perceived by these officials as the shiftless dregs of the

earth, a "swinish multitude," whose plight was perhaps Nature's way of signifying their unworthiness. Since the Irish were meant to be born poor, such conjecture went, they also were meant to die poor.

Charles Edward Trevelyan, the Crown's official in charge of relief and a dominant figure throughout the famine years, wrote: "The Great Evil with which we are to contend is not the physical evil of the famine, but the moral evil of the selfish, perverse and turbulent character of the people." As the famine raged, one Irish Catholic priest charged British policymakers with having "made the most beautiful island under the sun a place of skulls."

For the downtrodden Irish, there was no staying. "Before the Famine, many emigrants chose to leave Ireland," explains Luke Dodd, Director of Ireland's Famine Museum in County Roscommon. "The



Famine did away with the choosing. It had become a matter of leave or die."

So leave they did, by the tens of thousands. After the sad farewells and a final blessing by their priests, the wayfarers turned their backs upon their homes and the past they had known. Then, bearing their bundles of clothing, they headed by horse-cart or on foot for the coast, where they boarded cattle-boats for the trip across the Irish Sea to Liverpool. Few of them would ever again set eyes upon their native land.

For most, destiny pointed to America. The price of passage to U.S. ports was the equivalent of between \$7.50 and \$12.50 per person, roughly half of an Irish laborer's wages for an entire year. During the "Hunger Years," more than a million Irish men, women, and children came to America, many joining relatives already here who had paid their fares. It was one of the most massive and desperate migrations in human history.

The typical sea-going packet of the era was little better than a sealed box, with so little sail that the journey across the Atlantic Ocean could take six or more weeks. Known as "coffin ships," these vessels sailed without the legal quotas of food and water. But the desire to flee Ireland was so great—and the peasants' lack of knowledge of geography so poor, that they were eager to board the ships. Earl Grey, Britain's Secretary of State for the Colonies, noted that: "many of the emigrants are content . . . to submit to very great hardships during the voyage."

For most, the passage westward proved difficult; for those unfortunates in steerage, it was a horror-ridden experience. Hundreds, ranging in age from ninety years old to infants born aboard ship, huddled in a single, dark hold. Allotted scarcely more space than their bodies occupied, passengers kept their rag-tag belongings by their sides; slept without bedding on pinewood shelves;

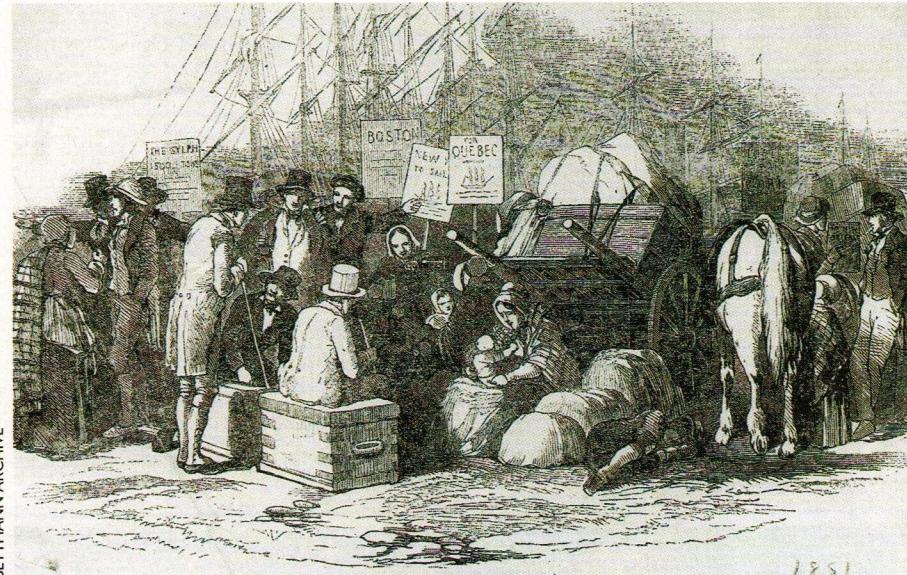
and lived amid the scattered filth and human excrement that made the quarters below-deck a befouled, disease-ridden, noisome dungeon.

One Irish pauper who made the voyage in 1848 recalled that "Water was down to a cup a day per passenger. Of the four hundred who set out, sixteen died at sea—they were killed in fights for food, or died of fever."

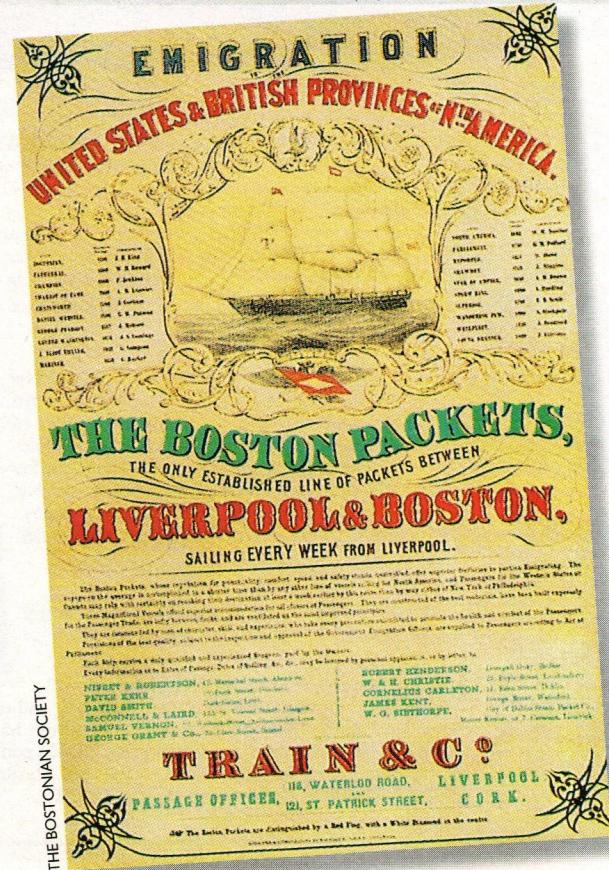
Bodies of the dead were wrapped in old sails or placed in meal sacks. After some words of prayer by the living, the

dead were dropped into the sea. It is estimated that more than 15,000 would-be Irish Americans perished during the Atlantic crossings. Wrote one U.S. official: "If crosses and tombs could be erected on the water, the whole route of the immigrant vessels from Ireland to America would long since have assumed the appearance of a crowded cemetery."

A doctor, clambering into the hold of the *Ceylon*, found "emaciated figures, eruptions disfiguring their faces . . .



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THE BOSTONIAN SOCIETY

Those who decided to seek a better future in America, Canada, or Australia piled their meager belongings on a coach in their hometown (left) and headed for the coastal city of Cork (right, top), where they boarded boats for Liverpool, England. Once there, they booked passage on ships such as the Boston packets that advertised one-way voyages to America for a fare of \$12.50 (right, bottom).

aboard were 115 cases of typhus." Peering into an open hatch on one vessel, a boarding officer saw "a mass of humans lying over each other, covered with sores." An inspecting official on another ship told of "oil lamps giving glimpses of forms, white faces looking up. It was a cavern of the damned."

Throughout the famine years, the "coffin ships" loomed out of the ocean mists, bearing to New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, the living-dead of Ireland. As the immigrant-packets made their sullen way toward the landing piers, there was no rejoicing from harborside to bid them welcome.

Seven out of ten of the newcomers came ashore at New York. Denizens of the South Street waterfront—pickpockets, short-change artists, and assorted con men—did their best to bamboozle the newcomers. Unscrupulous touts called "runners" steered them to rundown boarding houses, where they were cheated out of their precious money and often had their baggage forcibly taken from them.

Diseased, worn, and penniless, most Irish remained close to the ports where

they landed. Clinging together for companionship, they tried to eke out an existence. Bound by kinship of religion, politics, and custom, they mustered considerable communal fortitude to contend with the challenges they encountered. In Manhattan's notorious Five Points slum, where thousands of the famine refugees would settle, novelist Charles Dickens observed "Leprous houses; lanes and alleys paved with mud knee-deep; underground chambers; hideous tenements, which take their name from robbery and murder; all that is loathsome, drooping, and decayed is here."

The beleaguered Irish crammed into mildewed, lice-infested rooms, from cellar to garret, in ramshackle lodging-houses. Such a room—serving as kitchen, living-space, and bedroom for five or more people—rented for about four dollars a week, close to a week's wages. Typhus, cholera, tuberculosis, and pneumonia took a heavy toll. Many who had fled for their lives from the old country came to grim endings in the almshouses, prisons, and gutters of the land where they sought safe haven.

The majority of immigrants arrived in

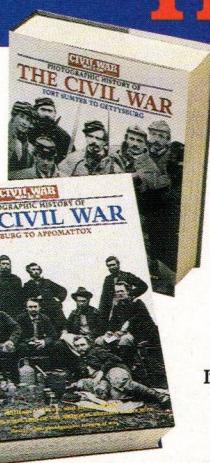
the United States with few skills, and their knowledge of farming was usually limited to the planting and harvesting of potatoes. They were used to hard work, although famine and disease had left its mark. But the Irish had great powers of survival and through perseverance and often back-breaking toil, they proved their character and worth on just about every work-front.

Even so, American-born workers feared that the newcomers would drive wages down; a labor newspaper warned that they "will work for what Americans cannot live on." The "freedom" that many Irish experienced on their arrival in America bore a close resemblance to the subjugation they had suffered at the hands of the British in the world they thought they had left far behind.

"No Irish Need Apply" signs went up and were a long time in coming down. "We, as a people, are intolerant of ragged garments and empty stomachs," wrote one contemporary American observer of the famine arrivals. "The ill-clad and destitute Irishman is repulsive to our habits and our tastes."

Though still a new nation, America

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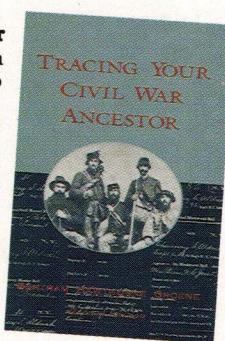
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had begun to shape a distinctive national character. Like other nations, it formed its identity around the beliefs, customs, and experiences held in common by a majority of its people. The young republic had been fostered in the heritage of English law and the Protestant faith. With wave after wave of doom-ridden Irish, many of them devout Catholics, set upon America's shores by the famine, growing numbers of Americans feared a rending of their cultural and religious singularity.

By the mid-1800s, indeed, a mood of "nativism"—America for Americans—had taken hold. Even before the famine refugees reached the United States, Protestant antipathy toward Catholic immigrants had evidenced itself, sometimes violently. And newcomers responded in kind. The magnitude of the famine immigration only served to inflame such rancor. One American Protestant leader referred to the newcomers as "a massive lump in the community, undigested and indigestible."

"We were raised amidst ghosts of the Famine," Hannah Murphy, born into a tenant-farm family at the end of the nineteenth century, would say. Mother of the author of this article, she was to emigrate from Cork to New York just before World War I. In the new land, she met and married a man of English descent. "Even in America," she recalled, "those ghosts were with us. The famine was part of the Irish soul."

"The Irish changed America," observes Rosa Meehan, Director of the American Irish Historical Society. "On just about every front—politics, unions, professions, the arts, among others—they made a significant difference in the quality of people's lives."

The potato famine was a tragedy that devastated Ireland, dishonored the British government, and changed the composition of the United States. But the Irish were ultimately strengthened by the hardships they encountered, their pride stirred by prejudice. They not only survived; in time, they and their descendants prevailed. ★

Ed Oxford is a frequent contributor to American History. His most recent contribution—"TV's Wonder Years"—highlighted television's infancy during the early 1950s for our January/February issue.



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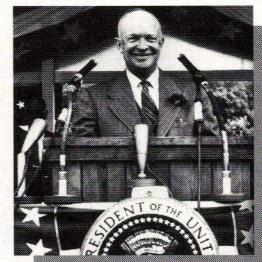
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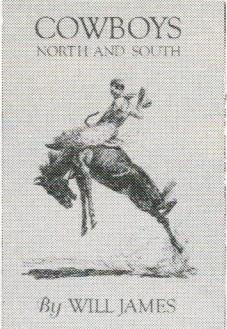
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THE FIRST TO DIE

continued from page 27

ing for them. Although commanders on both sides later insisted that their men had been ordered not to fire first, blood had been shed. The finger that first pulled the trigger remains shrouded in mystery. But there is little doubt that the colonials, being outnumbered by three to one, obeyed the order to disperse. The British fired into the breaking ranks, killing eight and wounding ten more.

The several hundred colonials already mustered at Punkatasset Hill when the Acton men arrived were being augmented by troops from communities such as Bedford, Lincoln, and Westford. Surely, they thought, this force could take the bridge, guarded only by a small troop of redcoats, and drive the British forces back toward Boston. But if they did not act now, British reinforcements were certain to arrive, and the colonists might be dangerously outnumbered.

Meanwhile, a troop of British soldiers, which had stayed behind in Concord village searching for hidden munitions and other stores, found and set fire to more gun carriages. In the excitement, the blaze accidentally spread to the "town house." An elderly widow living nearby, realizing that several residences were sure to burn as well, begged the British to help put out the fire. At her urging, the troops joined the bucket brigade to douse the flames.

When the colonials massing on Punkatasset Hill saw the smoke, they mistakenly concluded that the British were on a rampage. "Will you let them burn the town?" cried adjutant Joseph Hosmer of Concord. Answering with a resounding "No," the officers decided upon a defiant show of strength. One account states that the lead was offered to a Concord officer, who declined it, but historians have questioned whether a local man would have refused to march to save his own town.

Whatever the preamble, Isaac Davis was then proffered the lead. This honor may have been offered because his men were fully equipped with bayonets, an advantage in hand-to-hand combat. In any event, Davis accepted, declaring that "I haven't a man that is afraid to go." The colonial forces formed up, with Davis's company in the lead, and advanced down the hill to the strains of

"The White Cockade." Their orders were to hold their fire unless fired upon.

Seeing the colonials coming, the British retreated over the bridge. The last men across began to tear up planks in order to stop the advancing force in its tracks. Major John Buttrick, the British commander, called out, ordering the colonists to halt. His soldiers, meanwhile, assumed battle formation. When the colonists neared the bridge, the redcoats fired a random volley that wounded fifer Luther Blanchard and Jonas Brown of Concord.

The next British volley fell short, but served as proof that they meant to fight. As the colonists prepared to fire their muskets, the British fired again. Davis, just then raising his gun at the king's men, fell dead, shot through the heart. A private in his company, Abner Hosmer, received a mortal bullet wound in his head.

Buttrick, seeing blood flow, shouted to the troops. "Fire, fellow soldiers! For God's sake, fire!" As the British scattered, the colonials returned fire, striking two and putting the rest to rout. The fray lasted only three minutes. But the shots fired that day would echo for all time.

The king's troops straggled into Concord, then gathered with reinforcements for the march back to Cambridge. Along that route, they were harried every step of the way by the colonials. The British mission was a failure—the rebel leaders were safe and the colonists had salvaged most of the stores. And most important, the war was on; the American colonies' march to independence—one that would only find its end with the Treaty of Paris eight years later—had begun.

The 1783 treaty may have ended the war, but the controversy over what happened at Concord on April 19, 1775 raged on for more than a century. One disgruntled historian wrote that Davis had usurped the lead. Another retorted that he was the heart and soul of the Concord fight and that when he died, the fight was over. A latter-day wag, mindful of the wrangling, quipped that "it was a Lexington battle, fought in Concord by Acton men." History seems finally to have settled on the matter by concluding that there is enough glory to go around.

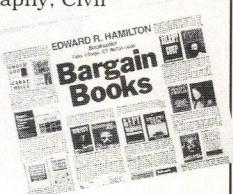
Isaac Davis and Abner Hosmer were carried home that afternoon, and Hannah remembered many years later that Isaac's "countenance was little altered."

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But his courage had helped to change the course of history; as Woodbury pointed out, the highway over which his body was carried was not the king's any longer.

Today, Davis himself is well revered in Acton. The local chapters of the Minutemen, of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and many other groups bear his name. His line of march from Acton to the bridge is now a National Historic Site, retraced each April 19 by swarms of ordinary citizens. Near the site where he fell, now within Minutemen National Historic Park, stands Daniel Chester French's statue of the Minuteman. Since no image of Davis is known to exist, the artist fashioned the figure after studying the likenesses of some of Davis's descendants who were said to favor him. President Ulysses S. Grant was guest of honor when the statue was dedicated at the centennial of the fight in 1875.

The monument in the town of Acton, for which the Reverend Woodbury pleaded so eloquently, was erected in 1851. The bodies of Isaac Davis and Abner Hosmer—as well as that of James Hayward, who was killed at Fiske Hill in Lexington later that April day—were moved from the old burying ground to the base of the monument on the town Common.

Isaac's widow Hannah married twice more, both husbands also preceding her in death. In 1818, when she was 71 years old and impoverished, she sought a pension from the federal government. Her first attempt failed, and it was not until more than twenty years later that Hannah, then in her nineties, finally was granted a pension. Some senators, notably John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, objected, fearing a torrent of similar claims.

But Hannah's cause found an eloquent champion in no less a statesman than Senator Daniel Webster, who declared that her husband Isaac had fallen "in his early manhood, one of the very first martyrs in the cause of liberty, and, if I mistake not, the first American officer who sealed his devotion to the cause with his own blood. . . . An early grave in the cause of liberty has secured to him the long and grateful remembrance of his country." *

A freelance writer based in Littleton, Massachusetts, Jeanne Munn Bracken is a contributor to the 1996 issue of Women's History magazine.

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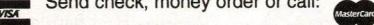
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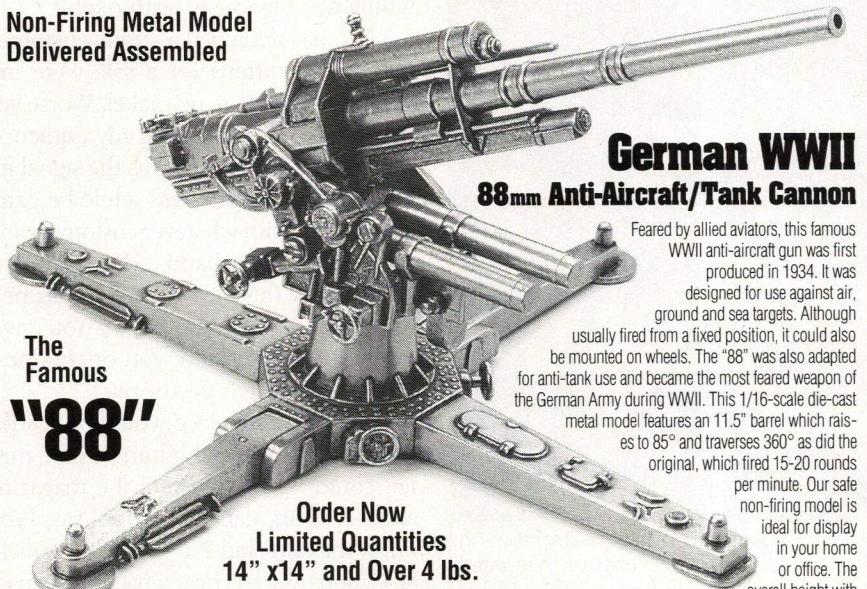
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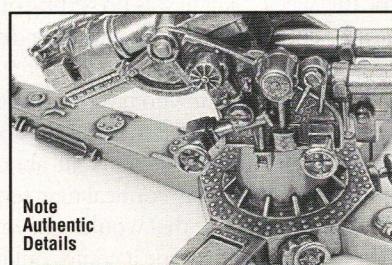
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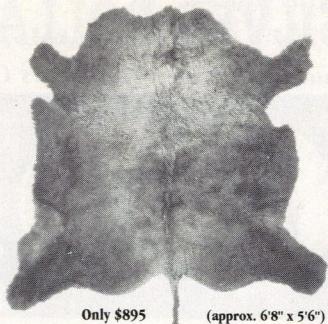
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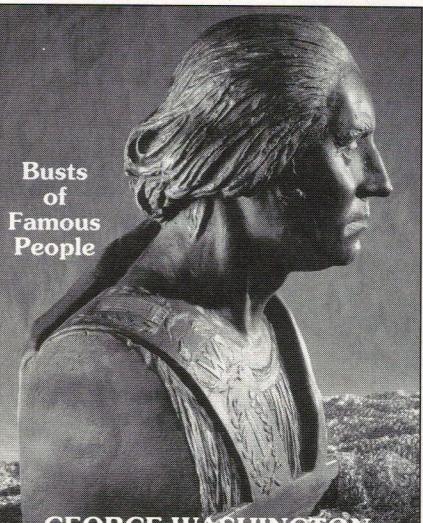
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TRAINING SCHOOL FOR BOYS

continued from page 51

Establish a new following of satisfied customers in Columbus that he would hold my Expert Degree ranking for me.

Once our family had resettled in Ohio my first order of business was to take myself down to Cherry's Confectionery on North High Street, where the Thursday afternoon turmoil of boys and bundles of magazines was reassuringly reminiscent of May's Drug Store. Sales climbed gratifyingly, and by the time a year had passed, I had built my route up to more than a 120 a week, which earned me the title of Master Salesman. This time my name was engraved on a new watch fob.

Among my new customers was a Mr. Jones, the owner of a haberdashery near the Ohio State University campus, who was captivated by my sales pitch when I first approached him. Too much so, I found when I returned the following week. "Sure, kid, I'll buy one," he said when I entered the store. "But first you gotta gimme the sales talk." This struck me as an unnecessary exercise, but there appeared to be no way out of it—unless, of course, I chose to stand upon my dignity and retreat without his nickel, which was obviously unthinkable.

Mr. Jones remained a steady customer, but the conditions for a sale were immutable—no pitch, no nickel. Worse yet, he insisted on expanding my audience. My weekly appearance was the signal for a suspension of business while he gathered around him whatever customers and salesmen were on hand. "Hey, I wantcha to hear how this kid sells the magazine," he would command them. "You guys think you're salesmen, you oughta hear this. Okay, kid, gimme the pitch."

By this time my face would be scarlet, and I would plead with him: "Look, mister, couldn't you just buy the magazine and—" "Nah, nah," he would say, "you know the rules, kid. No sales talk, no nickel. C'mon now, let's hear what's in the magazine this week." There was no getting out of it, so I would open the magazine for display to the grinning circle. "Well, there's a guy named Mussolini who has taken over the government in Italy, and this article by Richard Washburn Child tells all about him. Now here's a really comical new serial by P. G. Wodehouse that would cost you a couple bucks by the time it comes out in a book, but you get it from me for only a

nickel a week. . . ."

Eventually I accepted that this was an act I was paid to perform; I went along with it, partly because Mr. Jones not only bought his Post, but also insisted that each member of the audience pony up a nickel as the price of admission. I learned to parry their wisecracks with responses (courtesy of Our Boys) that pleased the impresario haberdasher even more.

Although the Post was the Curtis flagship, the company published two other magazines, the *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Country Gentlemen*. Consequently, we carriers became known as "P-J-G boys," as well as Curtis Salesmen. The Journal sold for a dime, the Gent for a nickel.

Not being in quite such demand as the Post, the incentives for these publications were higher—one Greenie for each sale, compared with one for every five Posts. The commissions also were better, four cents on the Journal, two cents for each *Country Gentleman*. Except for a few transplanted farmers, I was never able to corral too many customers for the latter, but my monthly buyers of the ladies' magazine soon equaled the number on my Post route.

By the end of my fourth year as a Curtis salesman, I had been promoted to District Agent. This meant that the truck now dropped off the Posts at my home each Thursday, and I dealt them out to eight or ten boys who were under my tutelage as fledgling members of the League.

Becoming a District Agent required me to furnish character references and to post a \$100 cash bond with the company to guarantee payment of bills. But it was worth it, for now I earned an additional penny on each copy that the boys sold, in addition to the proceeds from my own route sales, and the company paid the same rate of interest on the bond as the \$100 would have earned in a savings account.

In another year or so, as I acquired my first pair of long pants and prepared to forsake my bike for a Model T, it was time to put away childish things. I turned in my last Brownies for a three-battery Eveready flashlight with red and green bulbs for signaling and bid a fond farewell to the League of Curtis Salesmen.

Within another decade, as it turned out, the League was wallowing in heavy waters as the effects of the Great Depression began to be felt. The college-loan

program had to be abandoned, for the company had its hands full with uncollectable loans to jobless college graduates. As well, Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal child-labor laws forced changes in the company's elaborate controls and supervision of its boy salesmen to keep them from being regulated as employees. Then, with the onset of World War II, the cost of prizes soared, if they were obtainable at all; supervisory manpower became scarce and more expensive; and wartime paper shortages caused problems for all publishers and made it unpatriotic to push for more circulation. So, the ax fell on the League.

By the 1960s, the *Post* itself was in deep trouble, both from its own internal problems and from the changing times that brought a new generation of readers with different tastes to be satisfied. After numerous editorial changes, the *Post* suspended publication in February 1969. Soon after, Curtis Publishing was sold to the SerVaas family, which retained the company name and revived the magazine in the summer of 1971.

But former Curtis executives who were there before the fall become almost reverential when they recall the halcyon days of the *Saturday Evening Post* and its League of Curtis Salesmen. "I look back with awe on the great organization of boys," one of them told me. "Time after time when traveling by plane or train on company business, I would find that my seat mate was another businessman who would credit the League of Curtis Salesmen with giving him his start. It was more than just circulation. It was a boys' training program."

How many of those quarter million boys went on to success no one knows. When the new *Post* started up again in 1971, it put out a call to former League salesmen, asking them to let the company know how they were doing. Among those whose names were listed in future issues were former Random House publisher and television game-show panelist Bennett Cerf, TV personality Hugh Downs, department-store founder Stanley Marcus, and oilman J. Paul Getty. But I'll bet even money that no League alumni ever approached a prospect with the diffident plea: "You wouldn't wanna buy a Boeing 747, wouldja?" ★

Himself a former member of the League of Curtis Salesmen, Earl Clark is a freelance writer who lives in Port Angeles, Washington.

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BEAST OF BATAAN

continued from page 39

The prosecutor, who was in charge of such things, allowed her two visits with her husband.

Fujiko Homma charmed the press at the airport on her arrival and was an instant hit with everybody who caught even a glimpse of her. Her presence as a witness, however, was a major problem for the defense. Practically speaking, no Americans or other Westerners would testify, and, though Homma was considered a benign administrator during his brief tenure, collaboration was still such a sensitive issue that few Filipinos would willingly appear to testify on behalf of the commanding general of the Japanese invaders.

The defense case opened on January 29, with the testimony of Homma's chief of staff, General Wachi Takashi. Wachi declared that there was significant interference from Tojo's Imperial Headquarters in Tokyo, especially on the part of the notorious Colonel Tsuji Masanobu, whom Pelz described as "the man of mystery, [who] was a true villain in Singapore." Wachi told Coder, Pelz added, that "it was he who ordered the execution of 10,000 Chinese there."

But Wachi, described by the *New York Times* as a "sinister-looking little man," made little positive impression on the tribunal. In fact, Pelz felt that Wachi "hurt the cause by his obvious effort to outfox the prosecution and also by desiring to make everything too pat."

Although he had concluded that Wachi was "a smooth liar," Pelz continued to believe General Homma. However, the defense team's belief in its client became, for all practical purposes, a moot point on February 4, 1946, when the U.S. Supreme Court denied the appeal in the Yamashita case. In a six-to-two decision, the Court ruled that it was "not concerned with the guilt or innocence" of General Yamashita, but "only [with] the lawful power of the commission" to try him.

One of the dissenting Justices, Frank Murphy,* wrote that the fact that "there were brutal atrocities is undeniable. That just punishment should be meted out to all those responsible is also beyond dispute. But this does not justify the abandonment of our devotion to justice in dealing with a fallen enemy

*The other was Justice Wiley Rutledge.

commander. To conclude otherwise is to admit that the enemy has lost the battle but has destroyed our ideals. . . . Either we conduct ourselves in the noble spirit of our Constitution . . . or we abandon all pretense to justice, let the ages slip away, and descend to the level of revengeful blood purges."

Nevertheless, the majority of the Court had spoken, and with the way cleared for General Yamashita to be hanged, General MacArthur wrote that the enemy commander had "failed in his duty to his troops, to his country, to his enemy and to mankind. He has failed utterly his soldier's faith; [his life is] a blot on the military profession."

Despite the fact that whatever faint hope he might have had was gone, Homma took the stand in his own defense on the day after the decision came down. For two and a half days, he gave detailed answers to questions by both sides about the Bataan campaign, recalling many decisive moments, including a few when he feared his side would emerge the loser. He confirmed that he had several times been driven along the route that the prisoners marched, but stated that he had noticed nothing to excite his interest. "From testimony I have heard in court," he said "it appears there were many [bodies] along this route, but I don't see how that could be so, for I didn't see any." However, he added, "I was not particularly looking for dead bodies."

Homma also testified that no instances of mistreatment had been reported to him. Cross-examined closely about his stated policy of "kind treatment" for prisoners, he declared that "I came to know for the first time in the court of [the] atrocities, and I am ashamed of myself should these atrocities have happened."

When the chief prosecutor, Colonel Frank E. Meek, asked him if he was responsible for the actions of his men, Homma replied that he was, of course, "morally responsible," which the defense team hoped would be understood as distinct from being culpable for actions outside his direct control. But the next day's headlines read: "Death March Guilt Assumed By Homma."

After the general stepped down, the defense called his wife to the stand. The *New York Times* reported that she "testified that his 'soft' policy toward the Fil-

ipinos had brought him into disfavor with the Tojo war clique and led to his enforced retirement from the army three months after the conclusion of the Philippines campaign. General Homma, she said, had always been in favor of peace and had realized that Japan was heading toward the ruin that has now come upon her."

Remarkng on her testimony, Pelz wrote that "Mrs. Homma almost gaily took the stand in defense of her husband. Completely undaunted by the bright lights, the grinding of the movie cameras and the flashing bulbs, she told of her husband's character, their home life and his ideas." Her words, he said, caused listeners to "feel a lump in their throat," and Homma "sobbed as she said 'I wish that my daughter shall marry such a man as the General.' . . . We all had tears in our eyes."

Her sympathetic performance, however, left the general and the defense team with no illusions about the outcome of the proceedings. That night Pelz described in his diary what was probably to be his last meeting with Homma. The general, he wrote, "said he is satisfied that the whole matter, i.e. his life, is now a closed book. . . . [E]verything that could be done has been done. He feels that the record is his explanation to the world, but he did break down when he told us . . . how grateful he was for our efforts." The lawyer concluded by writing that he believed Homma to be "a good man who was placed by fate in an impossible situation."

On February 9, the commission heard closing arguments. Several of the defense team participated. Captain Coder suggested to the generals of the commission that they "would have done exactly what General Homma did." Pelz stated that General Homma was required to move the prisoners away from the tip of Bataan: "He was damned if he did, and damned if he didn't."

"THE DEFENSE could only argue that the appalling events in question not only ran counter to General Homma's orders and policies, but that he had no knowledge of them."

and General Homma was to blame: "His headquarters was 500 yards from the road as 70,000 Americans and Filipinos dragged themselves past. He didn't care. . . . If he had cared to listen, he could have heard the screams of the dying."

At least four of the five judges of the military tribunal must have agreed with the prosecution's contention that the general, as commanding officer, should have known what his men were doing. Although he was acquitted of unlawfully refusing to accept General Wainwright's surrender, Homma was convicted on the Death March and other charges. He was sentenced February 11 "to be shot to death by musketry."

Homma was sentenced to a "soldier's death," as opposed to the ignominious hanging imposed on Yamashita. This decision, which a *New York Times* editorial called "confusing," seems to indicate at least some ambivalence among the Homma commission as to the validity of the prosecution's premise, as well as to the tribunal's procedures. In fact, there must have been considerable uncertainty expressed as the commission deliberated, although there was almost no doubt that a conviction and death sen-

Finally, Jack Skeen stood before the five generals and concluded Homma's defense by saying, "This entire case is an indictment not of an individual but of the system and background of the Japanese Army and the Japanese theory of waging war." The defense team, he told them, had "become thoroughly convinced of the sincerity and integrity of General Homma We are proud to have represented him. Should Homma's life be taken the world will have lost a man who could do so much toward the continuation of peace."

After the defense had their say, Chief Prosecutor Meek made an impassioned demand for the death penalty. The Bataan Death March, he argued, would remain a "blot on history,"

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MESSAGE TO MACARTHUR

On April 9, 1951, President Harry Truman decided to fire General Douglas MacArthur; what followed was one of the biggest communications disasters ever suffered by a U.S. president.

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tence were never in question.

General Trudeau wrote in his *Engineer Memoirs*, published in 1986, that he was deeply concerned by the questions related to command responsibility: "how many echelons above the man actually committing the crime were seniors responsible, or what do proximity and distance and knowledge have to do with it . . ." He was not, he admitted, in favor of condemning Homma to death, "but I could only oppose it to a point that allowed him to be shot as a soldier and not hanged because that took a unanimous verdict, and I would not vote to hang him. I thought he was an outstanding soldier."

Pelz, who had accompanied Mrs. Homma to Tokyo on the eve of the verdict, stated later that "I got a certain thrill that he was ordered executed by firing squad. It sounds silly, but that is a much nobler death for a military man. . . . I made sure that Mrs. Homma understood the significance."

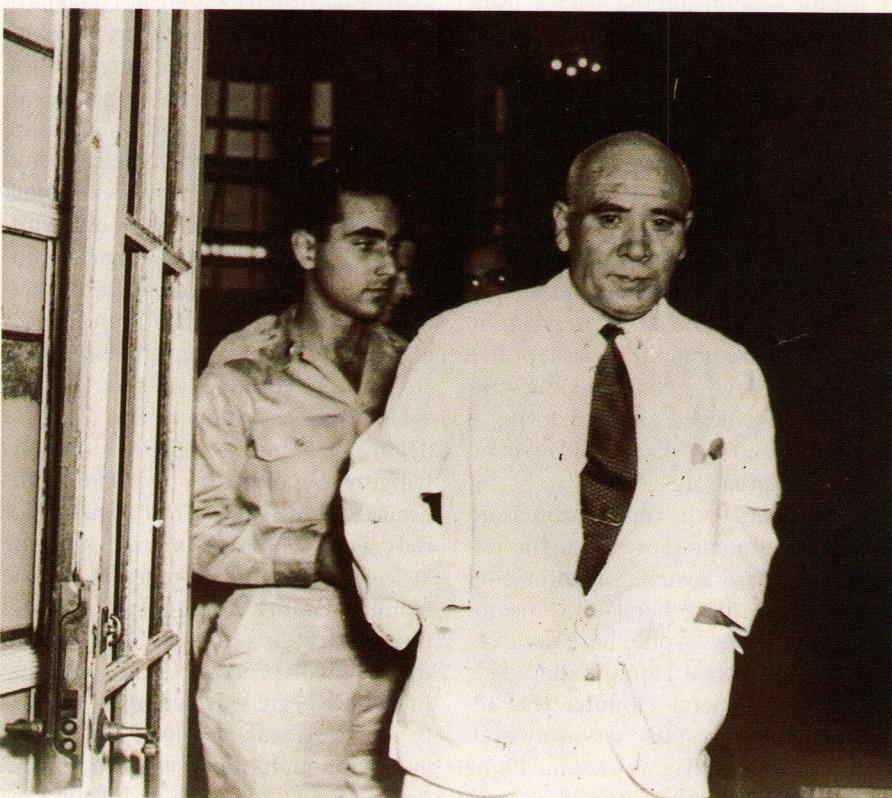
Like the lawyers representing Yamashita, the Homma defense team appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, but with virtually no hope of success. The Justices would obviously follow the Yamashita line in the Homma appeal. Again, Justices Murphy and Rutledge found these examples of military justice incompatible with the rule of law. Murphy said

"that just punishment should be meted out to those responsible for criminal acts is beyond dispute . . . but this does not justify the abandonment of our devotion to justice." Rutledge quoted Thomas Paine's dictum that he who "would make his own liberty secure must guard even his enemies from oppression; for if he violates this duty, he establishes a precedent that will reach himself."

Fujiko Homma went to visit General MacArthur in Tokyo, not to plead for her husband's life, but to ask him to review everything carefully and to thank him for the effort of the people in Manila on behalf of her husband. MacArthur told the press that "Mrs. Homma's visit was one of the most trying moments of my life. . . . No incident could more deeply illustrate the utter evil of war and its dreadful consequences upon those like her who had no part in it. I earnestly hope that a merciful providence may help and sustain her"

In reviewing Homma's sentence, MacArthur reached the conclusion "that

Following an unsuccessful appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, General Homma, shown here leaving the courtroom, was executed by a firing squad on April 2, 1946.



no trial could have been fairer than this one. No accused was ever given a more complete opportunity for defense. No judicial process was ever freer from prejudice." Declaring that "the defendant lacked the basic firmness of character and moral fortitude essential to officers charged with high command," he rejected "the minority views presented by two distinguished Justices of the United States Supreme Court . . . [S]uch legalistic arguments must not defeat the fundamental purpose of justice. Justice is a quality. Its purity lies in its purpose, not in its detail."

General Homma never wavered from his strong sense that the trial and its outcome were unjustified. At the same time, his conversations with and final letter to his defense team, as well as his moving correspondence with his wife and children, reveal an old Japanese soldier making his peace with the world. On the eve of the verdict, he wrote to his defense team, acknowledging that they had "tried your very best, leaving no stone unturned to give me a fair trial which I know is denied to me from the outset." He should have, he said, "killed myself many months ago, if I had known it would come to this . . . When I come to think that I am the man wholly misunderstood by the world, I feel sad, but it cannot be helped."

Leaving himself to the judgment of God and future historians, he expressed to his lawyers his "heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for the impartial stand you have taken so bravely. I respect Americans all the more for your sake."

Replying for the defense team, Skeen wrote that they could not "agree that you should have killed yourself . . . Rather we think you showed rare courage when you testified before officers of the Army you had defeated. We feel that you owed it to yourself, your family, your country and the world to tell your story, your side of what happened." The commission's verdict, Skeen assured him, "will not be the verdict of history. Apparently the war still goes on, but some day men's passions will have cooled and the truth will be sought and respected."

On April 2, 1946, General Homma Masaharu was executed by firing squad. The verdict, the sentence, the majority ruling of the Supreme Court, and the ex-

ecution were enthusiastically supported by editorial and public opinion throughout America and the world.

Since the end of World War II, the procedures for conducting war-crimes trials have been modified through the Geneva Conventions. The concept of command responsibility, as Americans saw in the 1974 trial of William Calley for the massacre of civilians at Mi Lai in Vietnam, has been reconsidered.

For Pelz, the issue remains a thorny one. Homma was, he explains, "someone quite different from what we had expected. . . [H]e was a gentlemen. . . [H]e believed in all of the ideals and principles that we believed in. . . [H]e would have been and could be a leading force in Japan for democracy and for good. On the other hand, I think it's very important that generals recognize that they will be held responsible for what happens under their command. And knowing the Japanese soldiers, I can argue that General Homma had an obligation to see what the plans were to march the prisoners from the Bataan Peninsula. I can't say with certainty that injustice was done."

Of the members of the defense team, Robert Pelz is the lone survivor. As of this writing, he works in his New York office every day. John Skeen died in 1986 after a long career as an admiralty lawyer in Baltimore. George Furness went on to work as a defense lawyer at the Tokyo trials until 1948; he then married a Japanese woman and lived in Japan the rest of his life.

In 1973, Homma's daughter Hisako wrote to Furness after visiting Manila to place a memorial at the place where her father was shot. She told him that her "last letter from my father says . . . Hisako! Never forget there were the honorable gentlemen as the lawyers who fought for me at the Manila trial."

The young lawyers who worked so hard in a lost cause certainly never forgot the experience. At the end of the trial, Pelz wrote in his diary: ". . . if nothing else we of the defense have carried the banner of Anglo-American justice. Certainly it has startled the Japanese. There is a good deal of satisfaction to be derived from the effort." ★

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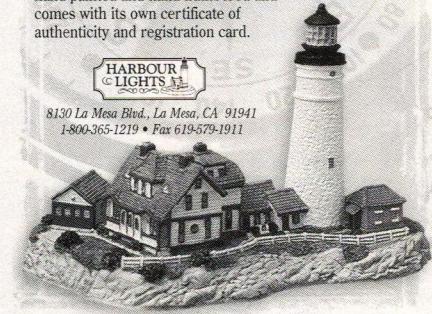
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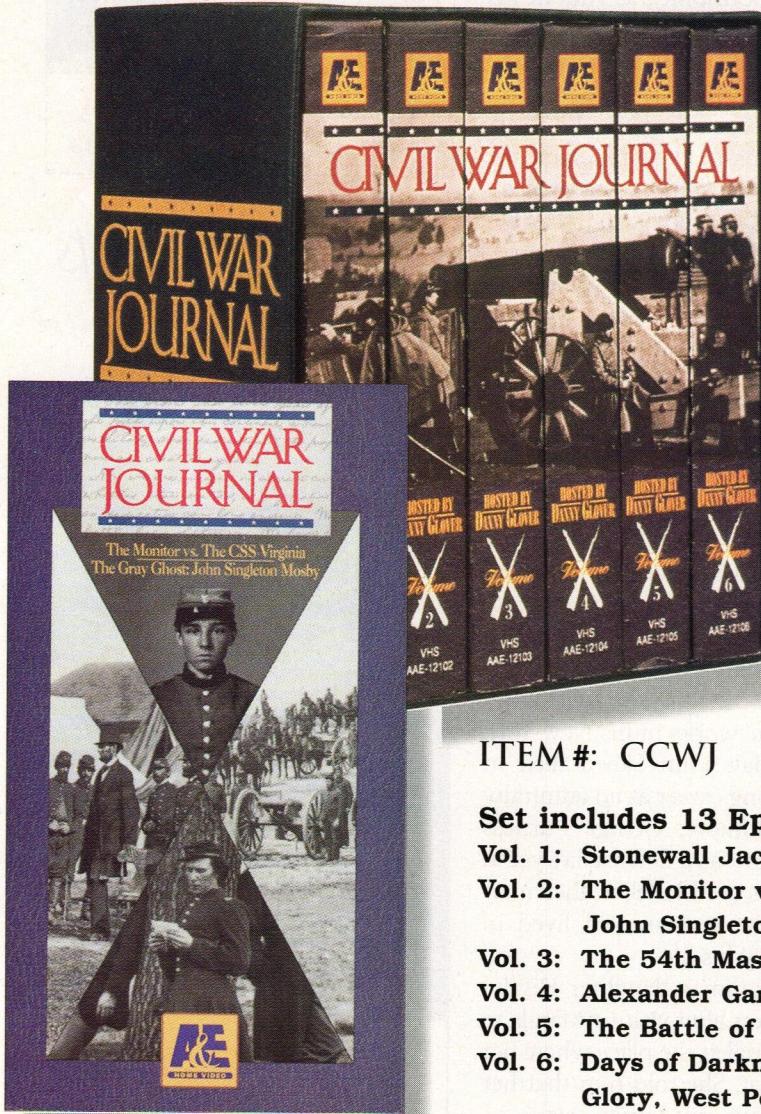
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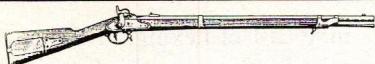
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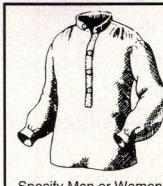
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LEXINGTON AND CONCORD

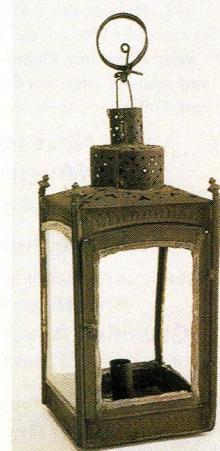
On April 14, 1775, General Thomas Gage, the governor of Massachusetts and commander in chief of the British troops in America, received orders to search out and seize stores of arms and munitions stockpiled during the previous year by colonists increasingly restive under



BROOK HALL, CONCORD MUSEUM PHOTO BY JAMES HIGGINS

British control. Spies for the rebel cause learned of the British intentions and arranged a signal that would alert their leaders as to when and by what route the king's soldiers would travel. The signal given, American patriots Paul Revere and William Dawes set out on the night of April 18 to warn rebel leaders John Hancock and Samuel Adams, as well as the captains of the local militias, that the British were coming. Along the way, they were joined by Dr. Samuel Prescott.

When Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith and several hundred British regulars reached Lexington, one of the suspected arms-storage places, on the morning of April 19, they encountered about seventy militiamen commanded by Captain



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CONCORD MUSEUM

John Parker. Although both sides were under orders to hold their fire, a shot rang out that ignited a skirmish that left eight Americans dead and ten wounded. The British continued toward Concord, where they met with more resistance from local militia [see page 24]. After a day of intense fighting and heavy casualties, the British withdrew to Boston; the military phase of the Revolutionary War had begun.

Today, the towns of Lexington and Concord form a center from which to explore the historic area where America's fight for freedom began. Lexington's Minute Man Statue, sculpted by Henry Hudson Kitson, stands on the eastern end of the town Green, site of those first momentous shots on April 19. Dioramas in both the Lexington Visitor Center (617-862-1450) and the Lexington Historical Society (617-862-1703) offer an overview of the clash between the colonists and the British troops. The front door of the Society's restored Buckman Tavern, where the minutemen assembled before facing the British, still bears the bullet hole made by a British musket ball.

The Hancock-Clarke House, where Samuel Adams and John Hancock received the news of the British advance from Paul Revere, features among its displays the drum used by 16-year-old William Diamond to assemble the minuteman on Lexington Green, and pistols belonging to the British officer, Major John Pitcairn.

The Munroe Tavern (617-862-1703),

one mile east of Lexington Green, became the headquarters for British reinforcements on April 19. The tavern also served as a field hospital and a place of rest for the soldiers. A reminder of the day's events can still be seen in a bullet hole in the ceiling of the tap-room. When President George Washington visited the Lexington battlefield in 1789, he dined at the tavern; the table at which he sat and documents relating to his visit are on display.

Visitors traveling from Lexington to Concord along "Battle Road" may stop at the Battle Road Visitor Center (617-862-7753), operated by the National Park Service, to see an informative audio/visual program and to collect a pamphlet explaining the soldiers' route and the events that occurred along the way.

Concord, one of America's most historic towns, boasts not only the Old North Bridge, where the Revolutionary engagement took place, but also the homes of nineteenth-century literary greats Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and the Alcott family. Among the Revolutionary War relics to be found at the Concord Museum (508-369-9763) is one of the lanterns hung in the steeple of



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TIME CAPSULE

objects in history

GILBERT STUART'S WASHINGTON

This year marks the bicentennial of one of America's most cherished works of art—the full-length portrait of George Washington (below) by Gilbert Stuart that hangs in the East Room of the White House. The place of honor among our national treasures enjoyed by this painting has little to do with the genius of its creator, which was real enough, or its individual artistic merit; rather, it stems from its rescue during the War of 1812 by First Lady Dolley Madison.

As she fled the White House on August 24, 1814—one step ahead of the British troops who soon burned it to the

ground—Mrs. Madison ordered the portrait removed from its frame and taken to safety, along with several documents important to the young nation. Thanks to her quick thinking, the image, which is an imposing eight feet high and five feet wide, was saved from destruction and is the only object found in the presidential mansion today that has been there ever since the earliest days of the republic.

Although this particular portrait was not posed for by the president, Stuart did have the opportunity to paint Washington from life on two occasions. A September 1795 session proved very frustrating for the artist, who was unable to break through Washington's natural reserve and formality. Although not entirely satisfied with the finished portrait, Stuart, always in need of money, sold several copies of the painting from his studio.

A second chance to have the president pose for him came Stuart's way in 1796, when Martha Washington commissioned another portrait of her husband. This time, the artist discovered that Washington would let his guard down if the subject of horse racing was raised.

The result of

these sittings so pleased Stuart, who felt that he had finally captured the man who lay beneath the formal exterior, that he reproduced the image more than seventy times for sale. It is this depiction of Washington that is most familiar to Americans today, if only because it is the basis for the portrait on the nation's one dollar bill. Stuart also based the painting saved by Mrs. Madison on this portrait.

In all, Stuart—shown here in a portrait by Rembrandt Peale—may have painted as many as 175 portraits of Washington, both because he found him an interesting and challenging subject and because the "Father of the Country" was a very marketable commodity, especially after his death in December 1799. And Stuart was in great need of such a lucrative source of income.

Born in North Kingston, Rhode Island, in 1755, Stuart was the son of a Scottish-born snuff grinder of the same name and Elizabeth Anthony. After serving several years as an apprentice to an itinerant artist, young Stuart sailed for England just before the Revolutionary War and there attracted the attention of another colonial, Benjamin West, in whose studio he studied for five years.

Drawn to portraiture, Stuart cared little for any details of a painting beyond the facial features, a quirk of taste that gave some of his works an unfinished look, but which led to his becoming one of the leading portrait painters in London. Despite his success, Stuart could not earn enough to care for his large family of 12 children and finance his tendency to enjoy all of life's pleasures to excess. Perennially in debt, he returned to America in 1792 or '93, where he continued until his death in 1828 to earn a reputation as one of the nation's finest portraitists. ★



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To the rear, Chief Gall of the Plains Indians directs his warriors as Rain-in-the-Face swings his tomahawk at Captain Tom Custer. Two Moons, who later gave a much-repeated account of the fight, leaps into the picture with his lance ready, as Crazy Horse, on the far right, charges Mitch Bouyer, the half-blood Crow scout who tried to warn Custer of impending danger.

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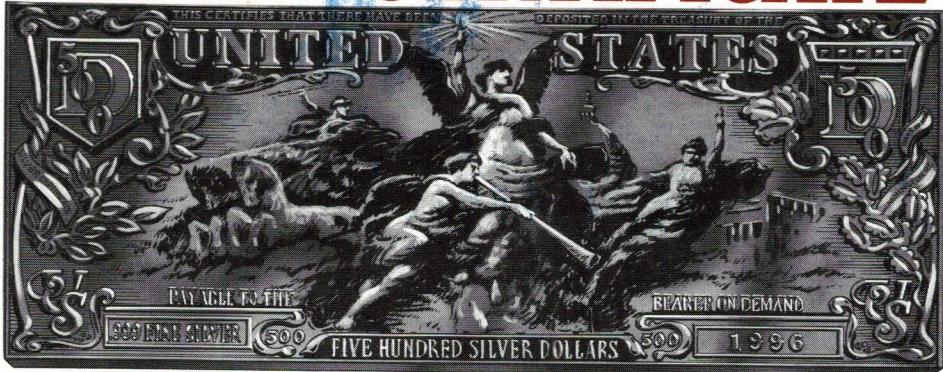
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